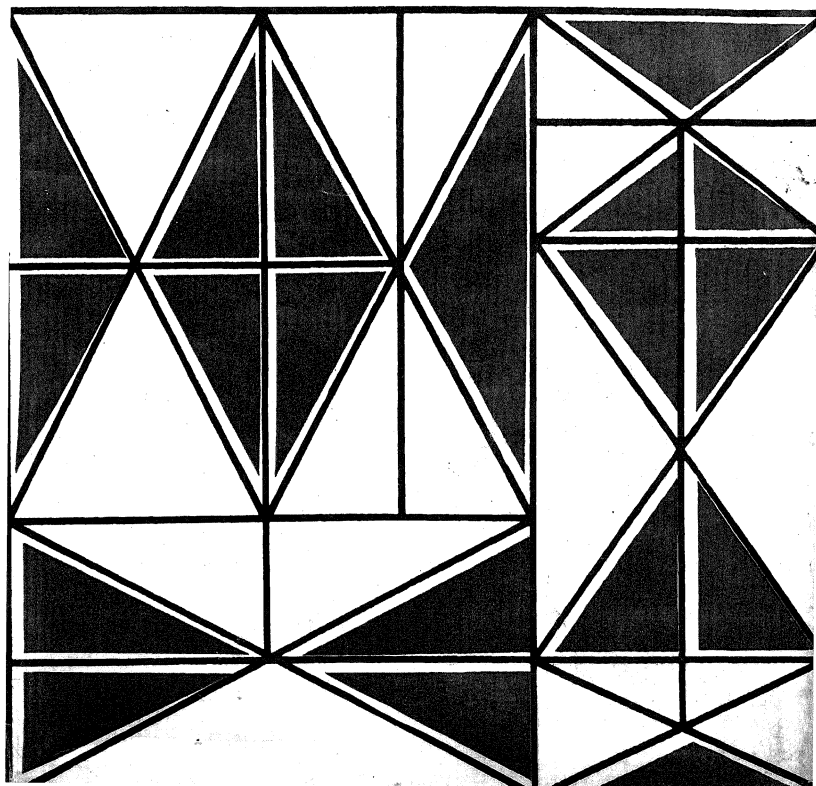


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CHRIST IN HIS SACRAMENTS

EDITED BY A. M. HENRY, O.P.



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Volume VI

CHRIST IN HIS SACRAMENTS

Edited by A. M. Henry, O.P.

Translated by Angeline Bouchard

CHRIST IN HIS SACRAMENTS, Volume VI of the Theology Library, completes the Economy of Salvation. As such it also completes the Theology Library.

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When the theologian approaches the question of the Sacraments, he is entering a new land where he must, more than in any other field, moderate his zeal for systematization. He is confronted not with notions to be ordered, but with facts to be accepted. The Sacraments are everyday realities of the Church's life that do not at first offer themselves to rational speculation, but rather to a living grasp. To know them it is necessary to live like a Christian and to watch the Church live.

The sacramental world of the Church is a world of signs that the life and death of Christ recapitulate and that the faith of the faithful continues to see and to receive in the Church.

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THEOLOGY LIBRARY—VOLUME VI

**CHRIST
IN HIS
SACRAMENTS**

**By a group of theologians
under the direction of
A. M. Henry, O.P.**

Translated by Angeline Bouchard

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Christ in His Sacraments

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INTRODUCTION

God has the initiative in the work of our salvation. It being His will that man be saved, He did not limit man to the use of his reason and his natural powers. God intervened in man's life and history. He made Himself known to Abraham, He established a people that He separated from all others, and He led this people "with a strong hand, and a stretched out arm" (Deut. 5:15). He showed forth His power by heavenly signs and helps, and He guided His people in all truth.

Then, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world" (Heb. 1:1-2). Christ, "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:24), through His words, through all that He did and suffered, and through His miracles, has prolonged and completed the economy of salvation inaugurated by God in ancient times. The words, acts, sufferings, and miracles of Christ are the efficacious signs of our salvation; and the Church, which is Christ perpetuated and communicated, never ceases to present and to apply them to us.

The sacramental world of the Church is indeed the universe of signs that the life and death of Christ recapitulate and that the faith of the faithful continues to see and to receive in the Church.

This world of signs has all the fullness of a whole life—a theandric life—which "signifies." Among these signs, certain ones have particular importance, through the will of Christ who instituted them. First among these are Baptism and the Eucharist, the sacraments of the Pasch, the sacraments of Christian initiation, of the redeemed people, of the Church. Baptism and the Eucharist sum up the whole mystery of Christ, our whole liturgy, all our feasts, our entire worship, our whole Christian life, and all our hopes. They are the cornerstone and the crowning of the whole sacramental structure.

Around these two sacraments cluster a number of "lesser signs": first of all, the other sacraments, and then the sacramentals, which form all the Christian rites. In the twelfth century, especially with Hugob of St. Victor (*De sacramentis*), the author of the *Sententiae*

By driving the Christian community to seek refuge in underground cemeteries, the persecutions made primitive Christian art a funereal art that is almost entirely symbolic.

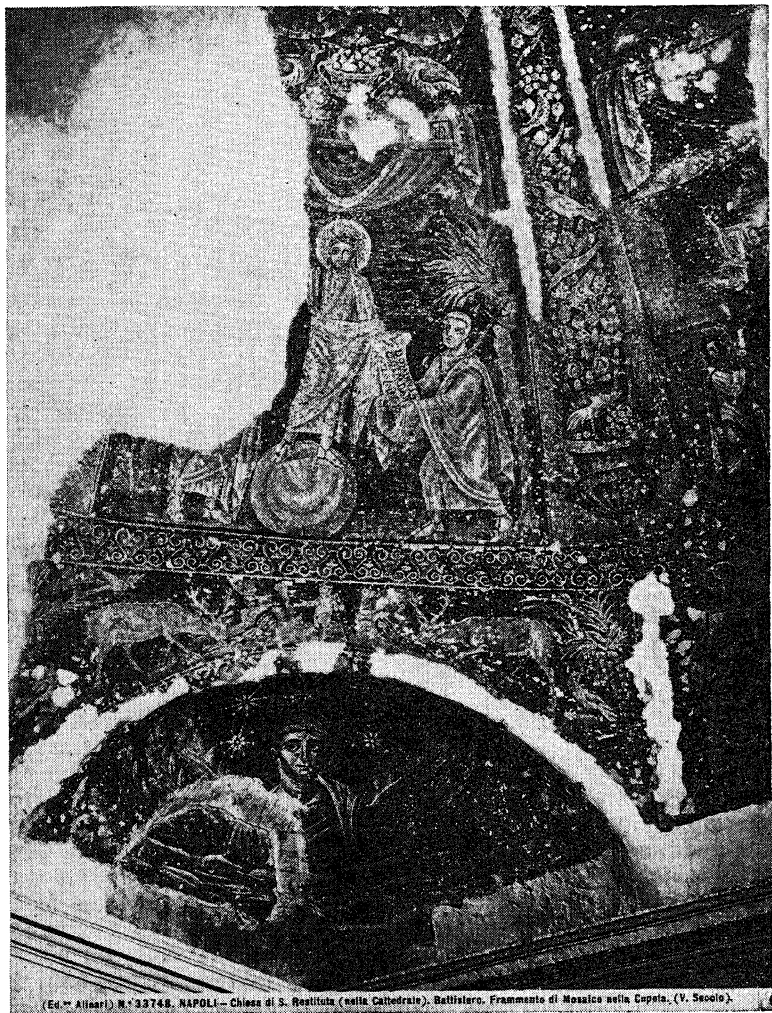
The Resurrection, which is the fundamental theme of the earliest iconography, is suggested by Biblical figures who symbolize or promise it: Jonas, Lazarus, the symbolic figure of the peacock, etc. Allusions to Baptism and to the Eucharist, the sacraments of the Resurrection, are borrowed from themes of sacramental typology: the flood; the fountain of life where the hart and the lamb quench their thirst; figures from the life of Moses—the Red Sea, the rock, the brazen serpent; the fish and the anchor, the dove, the phoenix, etc.

When the Christian religion gained freedom of cities and "triumphal art" was begun in the great basilicas, decoration preserved the typology that had been used in scattered themes in the catacombs, but it was organized into more extensive compositions.

Such is the case of the Soter baptistery in Naples. The cupola is octagonal in shape, the number eight being the symbolic number of the Resurrection. It is covered with a domed vault adorned with the monogram of Christ between the "A" and the "Ω."

The mosaic that decorated the compartments of the cupola is seriously damaged. Only four sections are even barely readable. They represent the giving of the law; the scene of the Samaritan woman, and the wedding feast of Cana; a man in a boat (the miraculous catch of fish); the holy women at the tomb. In the small apses formed by the compartments the four Evangelists can be seen, under an arc which delimits the image of a shepherd leaning with one hand on a staff and holding out his other hand in a welcoming gesture toward some deer or sheep.

The photograph on the opposite page represents the first scene. In the upper portion, the giving of the new law (Christ gives a scroll to St. Peter). Below, we see the shepherd and the deer; and at the bottom is St. Matthew. On the right we notice the peacock motif.



(Ed. Allinari) N.° 33748. NAPOLI - Chiesa di S. Restituto (nella Cattedrale). Battistero. Frammento di Mosaico nella Cupola. (V. Secco).

Divinitatis, and Peter Lombard, theology definitively distinguished those signs which are to be called sacraments and whose number was fixed at seven, from those signs to be retained simply as sacramentals (the consecration of virgins, the dedication of churches, benedictions, etc.), among which a certain hierarchy must also be maintained. The Councils, and the Council of Trent in particular, were later to establish this doctrine.

Unquestionably, theological progress benefited greatly by establishing the number of the sacraments at seven, on the basis of a unanimity of tradition both in the East and in the West. On the other hand, it would be unfortunate to forget the whole periphery of "signs" which surrounds and supports, and sometimes explains the sacramental septenary. Sacraments and sacramentals form a single whole. And we need all of them to explicate the wealth of signification which is in each one of them and into which we penetrate only imperfectly and partially as long as we have not totally put on Christ, whose life and death are made efficacious in each one of them.

It would be just as unfortunate to consider the seven sacraments as equal, under the pretext that all seven are called "sacraments." The Council of Trent sets us on our guard against this temptation with these words: "If anyone says that these seven sacraments are so equal to each other that one is not for any reason more excellent than the other, let him be anathema" (Canons on the sacraments in general, Canon 3, Denz. 846).

Thus, the signs of the Church form a single whole, and there is a hierarchy among the sacramentals as well as among the sacraments. We cannot enter the study of the "signs" of salvation without this preliminary over-all view. That is why we are prefacing our study of the sacraments with a chapter on the sacraments "in general."

We must also note from the start that the sacramental septenary was empirically constituted, with an eye upon man for whom it was instituted, and not for other considerations. It is a remarkable fact that the life of the Church and her infallible Magisterium did not perpetuate as a sacrament a sign such as the washing of the feet, whose institution by Christ has been attested to by the Gospel more definitely than Extreme Unction, for example. This does not mean that the sacrament of Extreme Unction was not instituted by Christ. We agree with the most traditional school of theological thought that all the sacraments were immediately instituted by Christ. What it

does mean is that the Church has retained as "sacraments" those signs which, in the wake of Baptism and the Eucharist, have a direct bearing on the Christian's life and on his essential needs.

Finally, a closing remark: Although the sacraments are signs, this does not mean they are only signs. They are in very truth channels of grace. Christ objectively presents His mysteries to our faith, and just as we are beginning to understand them and to adhere to them through faith, He works an interior renewal of our movement of faith and love, to configure us by means of the sacrament to that which it signifies.

The contact presupposed between an instrument and the thing to which it is applied is realized on the one hand by Christ who "touches" us outwardly and inwardly (by the sign that He presents to us and by His spirit), and on the other hand by ourselves when we accept the sign by making an outward and inward profession of faith in what it signifies.

Thus the sacramental sign is also an instrument which Christ uses to draw us back with Him to the Father. But it is an instrument only because it is first of all a sign, and in the measure that it is a sign. Important as sacramental causality may be, let us not forget the importance of sacramental signification. The sacraments represent to us the whole history of salvation from its prefiguration in Israel to the return of Christ, while passing through our soul which Christ is saving, here and now. Without this signification there are no authentic "sacraments."

Chapter I
THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

by A.-M. Roguet, O.P.

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Chapter I

THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

I. Character and Development of the Doctrine

1. A PARTICULAR THEOLOGICAL DOMAIN

When the theologian approaches the question of the sacraments, he is entering a new land where he must, more than in any other field, moderate his zeal for systematization. He is confronted not with notions to be ordered, but with facts to be accepted. Strictly speaking, he could be totally ignorant of their definition. In order to know them, he needs only to live like a Christian and to watch the Church live. The sacraments are not articles of faith proposed to the mind, and that is doubtless why they do not seem to be mentioned in the Creed.¹ They are everyday realities of the Church's life that do not at first offer themselves to rational speculation, but rather to a living grasp.

We might be content to study them in practical books which codify the formulas, rites, and rules of their administration: the missal (for the Eucharist), the ritual (for Baptism, the Eucharist administered outside of Mass, Penance, Extreme Unction, and Matrimony), and the pontifical (for Confirmation and Holy Orders). It is regrettable that current catechetical teaching of children and parochial preaching do not rely more heavily on these books in which the sacraments appear in a living context that preserves all their concrete and poetical savor.

2. THE SACRAMENTS IN THE BIBLE

The study of liturgical books also leads us back to Scriptural sources. The Church, which has the responsibility for preserving,

¹ Except in the article "communio sanctorum," which signifies not only "the communion of saints" but also, unquestionably, "the communication of holy things," since "sanctorum" is the genitive of the neuter noun "sancta." Moreover, in the Creed of Nicea-Constantinople, we profess our faith in "one Baptism." Now Baptism is the door to all the sacraments, it is the principle of the whole sacramental life.

ordering, and administering the sacraments, weights this administration with texts which would be almost unintelligible to anyone who did not recognize in them a fabric of citations or reminiscences, a thoroughly Biblical atmosphere.

But here again, let us not look upon the Bible as a sort of pre-theological manual that would furnish us sacramental theories in an unorganized form. Scripture constitutes the annals of God's people. If it throws light on the sacraments, it is in the measure that these sacraments have been lived.

The Old Testament records practices that were at once symbolic and redemptive and that can be called sacraments in a sense to be clarified later on: for example, the paschal lamb, the manna, the brazen serpent, the various sacrifices of the Tabernacle and of the Temple, etc.²

The Evangelists show us Christ instituting or announcing various sacraments. But St. John is the one who furnishes the richest bases for a theology and mystique of the sacraments. In his choice and ordering of episodes, we notice continual references to Baptism and to the Eucharist. We need only cite the account of the marriage feast of Cana, whose symbolism is at once baptismal and eucharistic; the conversation with Nicodemus on Baptism; the discourse on the living water with the Samaritan woman; the cure in the pool of Bethesda; the discourse on the bread of life; the foretelling of the rivers of living water after the Spirit was sent (Jn. 7:38); the cure of the man born blind, that the liturgy for the Wednesday of the fourth week of Lent rightly ties up with Baptism, the sacrament of illumination; the account of the washing of the feet; the eucharistic and eschatological discourses, with the announcement at the Last Supper of the sending of the Paraclete; the mention of the water and blood flowing from the side of the Crucified.³

The Acts of the Apostles give us a lifelike picture of the daily life of the first Christian communities, with its deep sacramentalism. St. Peter's sermons in the first chapters of the Acts (and his two Epistles likewise) make constant references to baptismal spirituality. The Acts have aptly been called "the Gospel of the Holy Spirit."

² We deliberately refrain from citing the symbolic actions of the prophets. As practical signs, they can be included in the genus sacrament. But they differ profoundly from the sacraments because, while they are gestures inspired by God, they were not instituted, they are not sanctifying, and above all they make no reference to the Christ to come.

³ Cf. O. Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (London, SCM Press, 1953).

In other words, they contain precious source material on the doctrine of Confirmation.

St. Paul can be thought of as a theologian of the sacraments. But with him, this is not merely a theoretical concern. While he does make profound comments on Baptism, the Eucharist, Holy Orders, and Matrimony, this is only in an occasional manner when dealing with matters of conscience referred to him or to settle differences with regard to worship or morality among the Churches he had founded.

The Epistle of St. James contains the only Scriptural testimony we possess on the practice of anointing the sick.

Finally, two books of the New Testament, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse, are of incomparable interest for a knowledge of the sacraments. They do not treat directly of the sacraments, but are written within a framework of images and symbols that are strictly liturgical. The Epistle to the Hebrews presents the liturgy of the Temple as a sort of parable of the priesthood exercised by Christ in His redemptive Passion. The Apocalypse shows us the dramatic but ultimately victorious destiny of the Church as the unfolding of a heavenly liturgy, many of whose features—notably the abundance of acclamations and doxologies—reveal to us an outstanding mark of the Christian liturgy and sacraments: their power of praise and of eschatological expectation.

3. THE SACRAMENTAL CATECHESIS OF THE FATHERS ⁴

The first Patristic writings give no place to sacramental speculation. The heresies attacked the great dogmas of the Trinity or the Incarnation. As for the sacraments, men were content to live by them. The *Didache* or the "Doctrine of the Apostles" and the *Apology* of St. Justin, both dating from the middle of the second century, limit themselves to describing the development of baptismal and eucharistic ceremonies. When the Church achieved peace and the liturgy had the opportunity to reach its full stature and to develop its symbolism, we began to have sacramental explanations. In the "great catechesis," the bishop or his delegate gave the catechumens only an over-all view of the Christian economy. After their Baptism, he explained in person to the neophytes, during Easter Week, the signification of the mysterious rites to which they

⁴ See the splendid work by Jean Danielou, S. J., *Bible and Liturgy* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1956).

had now been initiated. The discipline of the mystery may have consisted only in this pedagogical delay which consisted in putting the catechumen in direct contact with mysteries that were all the more stirring inasmuch as no intellectual explanation had withered their fresh beauty.⁵ This "mystagogic catechesis" expounded, explained, and suggested, rather than discussed or analyzed.

We are in possession of the "mystagogic catechesis" of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine (sermons *ad infantes*, that is to the newborn in Baptism). Here we already find a sacramental but positive theology, and if we may say so, a poetic theology, presented in a liturgical and not a scholastic atmosphere.⁶

4. SOME PRACTICAL PROBLEMS THAT CALL FOR A THEOLOGY

In truth, theology soon made its appearance, but unrelated to any intellectual preoccupation. The administration of the sacraments posed practical problems whose solution called for doctrinal reflection, although this reflection was not an end in itself.

The existence of heretical sects poses a problem concerning Baptism. St. Cyprian († 258), the great herald of Church unity, held that Baptism received outside the true Church was invalid, and that consequently those who abjured heresy had to be rebaptized. Against this thesis with its seductive logic, Pope St. Stephen spoke out in the name of *custom*: Wherever the sacraments are concerned, custom always triumphs over abstract theory. The Church is a living being, that acts spontaneously under the impulsion of the Holy Spirit. Theological reflection justifies these vital reactions after the fact. Thus, the convert from heresy must do penance for his sins in order to return to the bosom of the Church. He does not need to be rebaptized, for this would be against all tradition. But in the writings that defend this solution, we see the appearance of the distinction between the moral dispositions of the subject and the objective value of the sacrament that was to constitute one of the essential marks of the classical doctrine on the sacraments.

⁵ Cf. St. Ambrose, *De mysteriorum*, I, 2: "The light of the mysteries penetrates better to those who are not expecting it than if some explanation had preceded."

⁶ See A.-G. Martimort, "Catechèse et catéchisme" in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 6, pp. 37-48.

In Africa, early in the fourth century, the Donatist schism, which claimed to be the true Church, also wanted to rebaptize those who wanted to join it. The reason it advanced was apparently irrefutable: a person can give only what he possesses. Now, Donatus' followers held that the Holy Spirit cannot be present outside the true Church. Hence none but the true Church can give the Holy Spirit. St. Optatus, and later St. Augustine, rejected the practice of rebaptizing, and sought arguments to refute the reasons justifying it. They distinguished between the existence of the sacrament and its sanctifying fruits. They established on a firm basis theses which would later be formulated in scholastic terms: the distinction between grace and character, the notion of the *obex* (obstacle posed by the subject), the notion of the reviviscence of the sacraments, etc.

5. THE TWO FATHERS OF SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY: ST. AUGUSTINE AND ST. DIONYSIUS

Furthermore, St. Augustine, in his commentaries on the Gospels, his works on the interpretation of Scripture, and his speculation on the City of God, put into circulation definitions and adages on the sacrament as sign, on its social value, and on its composition of elements and words, which were to be the lifeblood of Western theology.

The East gave the Church another writer about a century later, whose influence was also to be very far-reaching: Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. Pseudo-Dionysius was a theologian in the specific sense that "mystical theology" was for him a meeting with God. Thus he described the sacramental rites in his *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* as mysterious and symbolical communications of divine life. As he saw it, divine life was refracted through rites considered much less as signs addressing themselves to faith than as life-giving mysteries. This attitude was to make a very deep impression on Eastern thought. And even in the West it was to be combined, against all expectations, with the Augustinian dialectic, thus preventing us from reducing the sacraments to the utilitarian role of simple instruments of salvation.

6. IN THE MIDDLE AGES

During the early Middle Ages, the doctrine of the sacraments made no progress whatsoever. The authority of Isidore of Seville

put an etymology into circulation in which the word *sacramentum* derived from *secretum*. According to this view, there was only a shade of difference in meaning between "secret" and the traditional "mystery." But if the sacraments were secrets, then they were unknowable, and discouraged all speculation.

The practice of the Church was not to be halted by such notions. The canonists took over the sacraments: after all, was it not their role to regulate the practical conditions concerning their administration? In reality, all they did was to codify the custom of the Church, which, we repeat, has always been the supreme norm in all that concerns the sacraments.

During the epoch of the Gregorian Reform, the question of the re-ordination of simoniacs came up. Natural reason would have seemed to justify this practice. The mind of the Church condemned it, through an obscure but very strong perception of the priestly character. The notion of the "validity" of the sacraments was clarified by the canonists and distinguished from their moral efficacy.

The twelfth century established the conviction that the sacraments "contain" grace, but was unable to harmonize this realism with the sacraments as signs. On the other hand, the number of the sacraments had not been definitively determined, and various authors made the list longer or shorter according to their lights. Some could not see why monastic profession, the dedication of churches, or funerals should not be sacraments. And how could marriage, on the contrary, claim the honor of being a sacrament?

It was at this time, however, that the sacramental septenary was definitively established, by a progressive awareness of the place these major rites occupied in the practice of the Church. But it was St. Thomas Aquinas who established that marriage was not simply a remedy for concupiscence but conferred grace and therefore had full claim to being a sacrament.

7. ST. THOMAS, THE DOCTOR OF THE SACRAMENTS

In this brief historical sketch, we shall not analyze the Thomistic positions on the sacraments. It would serve no purpose, as we intend to discuss this subject at length in our doctrinal presentation. In the matter of the sacraments, the Common Doctor is much more than the head of a school. We can truly say that the Church's Magisterium has simply confirmed his affirmations.

8. THE COUNCILS

The first Council that concerned itself at any length with the sacraments in general was the Council of Lyons (1245), and it limited itself to describing the rites in use in the Latin Church in order to make them known to the Greeks. The Council of Florence, in its decree for the Armenians (1439), repeated almost to the letter a tract by St. Thomas Aquinas on the sacraments (*De articulis fidel et Ecclesiae sacramentis*). It is undeniable that this decree seems to have above all a disciplinary value.

It was the Council of Trent, notably in its Seventh Session (1547)—on the sacraments in general—that established Catholic sacramental doctrine. This Council was clearly inspired by Thomistic doctrine, and yet its concerns were different from those of St. Thomas. It was faced with the need of raising a barrier against Protestant errors. It therefore rigorously affirmed the sacramental septenary, the efficacy of the rite *ex opere operato*, the necessity and inequality of the sacraments, the existence of sacramental character, the dignity of the liturgy, etc.

Since the Council of Trent, sacramental theology has made little progress. On the contrary, the anti-Protestant positions of the Council have often been stiffened or isolated by theologians. Ordinary teaching has laid primary stress on the productive role of the sacraments with regard to grace, on the *ex opere operato*, leaving in the background the aspect of the sacraments as signs, their relation to faith, and their value for worship and for society.

9. THE CONTEMPORARY REVIVAL

Our own times have witnessed a veritable rebirth of sacramental theology. We have come back to a purer knowledge of the Thomistic position. For example, Dom Vonier in his *Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, has brought back into favor the notion of sacramentality *sui generis*.

The progress of ecclesiology (see de Lubac, *Catholicism*, Congar, *Esquisses du Mystère de l'Eglise*, etc.) has restored the notion of the social value of the sacraments. The Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* records this rebirth.

The return to the Fathers and to the Bible, the liturgical renaissance that characterizes our epoch, the studies of Dom Casel in his

abbey of Maria-Laach,⁷ have restored to the sacraments the fullness of their mystery, their value as "re-presentations" with regard to Christ's Passion and to eschatological expectations.

10. THE ENCYCLICAL MEDIATOR DEI (1947)

Finally, the doctrine of the sacraments has been inestimably enriched by the encyclical of His Holiness Pope Pius XII on the liturgy. The liturgy is not defined in this encyclical, as is so often done, as the totality of the rules that organize exterior worship, but rather as the exercise by the Church of the priestly function inaugurated by Christ. Now the encyclical repeats over and over that the liturgy, which embraces all the redemptive and sanctifying action of the total Christ, includes the sacrifice of the Mass, *the sacraments*, and the divine praises.

Not so long ago, current teaching carved up the study of the sacraments into dogmatic theology (as establishing their institution by Christ and their efficacy), moral theology, and canon law (as regulating the casuistry of their administration), and lastly the liturgy, conceived as a totality of rubrics governing the obligatory but extrinsic ceremonies that accompany the sacraments.

Such a parcelling out ended in destroying the specificity of the sacraments, which are at once a divine fact, a call for a moral attitude, and an act of worship. By integrating the sacraments and the liturgy, the encyclical *Mediator Dei* places them once more within the vital context outside of which they become desiccated and distorted. It authorizes the creation of a theology of the liturgy (still to be realized) which will simply be a corollary to an integral sacramental theology.

11. CAN WE SPEAK OF THE "SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL" BEFORE STUDYING EACH OF THEM IN PARTICULAR?

Before we give a systematic presentation of the notion of sacrament, we must answer another preliminary question. Since the sacraments are not the result of premeditated dogmatic speculation, since they are first of all "existing beings," facts in the life of the Church, and since their theory has been developed only after the fact, may we not be losing sight of our object when we begin by giving a general theory of the sacraments as if the knowledge of each one

⁷ See special number of *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 14.

were to be deduced from it logically? On the contrary, should we not study each sacrament in its concrete individuality, and present the general theory of the sacraments only by way of an inductive conclusion?

It is certain that the order of invention is an inductive order, going from the particular to the general. But our problem here is to explain, not to discover. The presentation of a treatise on the sacraments in general has a pedagogical advantage: it lightens the load of explaining the various sacraments, by obviating the need for repeating about each what is common to them all.

Moreover, the presentation of the sacraments as a genus has the advantage of placing the emphasis on the sacramental organism. It is true that there are *sacraments*. But it is equally true that there is *only one* sacramentality, and that this is one of the marks of Christianity. A general treatise on the sacraments reveals the relationship they all have to the Incarnation and Passion of Christ, the Church, etc.

The only part of the objection that can be retained is that the notion of sacrament is not univocal but analogous. It is a notion that has a different realization in each concrete case. That is one of the difficulties of the sacramental theory.

Actually, this general framework has been deduced from the consideration of the two major sacraments studied by the Fathers and which have always been recognized to be true sacraments: Baptism and the Eucharist. It will often prove difficult to fit sacraments like Penance or Matrimony within this framework. For example, the category of matter and form which applies so well to Baptism and the Eucharist is more difficult to attribute to the other two.

As we said at the start, the sacraments are concrete facts, data from the life of the Church. They are much less accessible to intellectual speculation than to a vital, intuitive grasp. We shall be saved not because we have known them but because we have received them. The fact remains that by knowing them better we shall be able to live more deeply by them.

1. CHRIST AND THE SACRAMENTS

In Volume V we studied the mystery of the God-man, and His work of Redemption. This mystery and work have been perpetuated, detailed, and applied directly to us through the sacraments.

Thus, the treatise on the sacraments is very often only a corollary to the treatises on the Incarnate Word and on the Redemptive Word.

(a) *The institution of the sacraments*

It is an article of faith that Christ instituted all the sacraments. This is an indispensable note in the notion of sacrament. But this notion is shrunken in a childish way and meets with insoluble problems when it is put on the terrain of historical contingencies. In the Gospel we see scarcely more than the institution of two sacraments by Christ. And even then, as we shall see later on, we can argue as to the precise moment when Baptism was instituted. But this does not matter. When we say that all the sacraments were instituted by Christ, we are merely affirming that Christ is their author, the one who is personally and directly responsible for each of them; that every time a sacrament is administered, Christ is there to administer it; that every sacrament passes through Christ and communicates Christ's virtue to us.¹

(b) *The Church and the sacraments*

Some authors have thought they could avoid all difficulties by supposing that Christ had left to His Church the responsibility of instituting certain of the sacraments. But nowhere in the Gospel do we see that He left His Church any mission except the mission to dispense the sacraments. The Church does not seem to have been charged with inventing or instituting anything whatsoever, but only with administering Christ's heritage.

If the Church had been called upon to institute certain sacraments, it would follow that Christ had left an incomplete Church, entrusted with the task of instituting herself. For in truth it is the sacraments that build and constitute the Church. There is, as it were, an identity among the sacraments of the Church. The sacraments, like the Church, are Christ perpetuated, living among men and saving them until the end of the world. In Christ's mind, instituting the Church and instituting the sacraments were one and the same thing. All of tradition recognizes that the Church, like a new Eve, was born from the open side of her Spouse, the new Adam,

¹ *Directory for the Pastoral of the Sacraments*, adopted by the plenary assembly of the Episcopate for all the dioceses of France (April 3, 1951): "The sacraments are *acts of Christ*." (Par. 1.)

asleep on the Cross, when the water and the blood came forth representing Baptism and the Eucharist.

But this Church is not a servant, it is a spouse that administers the heritage in complete freedom. While Christ instituted each and every one of the sacraments, it does not follow that He regulated for all eternity and in the smallest details the administration of each of the sacraments. He could even leave to the Church the choice of the constitutive elements of certain sacraments. This explains to us why even the matter and the form of some sacraments have varied through the ages: the elements of signification may change without any change in the sign. The Church is the mistress of the sacraments not in their institution or in their innermost being, but in their practical ordering and expression.²

(c) *The seal of Christ*

Inasmuch as the sacraments are the works of Christ, the perpetuation of His action, they must bear His seal. As He is true God and true man, the World made flesh, the sacraments must have both a sensible, human aspect, and a spiritual soul, divine power. Since He saved us by His Passion, all the sacraments must be the sacraments of Jesus crucified. The grace that they confer upon us is therefore not a "common" grace, like that by which Adam lived before his sin, but a properly Christian, Christiform grace, and a cruciform grace: the sacraments assimilate us to Christ, and to Christ crucified.

Since Christ died "that He might gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad" (Jn. 11:52), the sacraments serve not only to save individuals but to unify God's people and to constitute the Church.

Since this same Christ is risen and will come again at the end of the world to judge us, His sacraments give us the pledge of our resurrection and strengthen us in our expectation of the day of the Lord.

Christ came not only to bring men the gifts of God, but also to make the prayers and homage of men rise up toward God; He came not only to heal wounded humanity, but also to assume this humanity so that its praise and thanksgiving might rise up to God. Hence the sacraments are not only gifts of God and means of salvation;

² See Joseph Pascher, *L'évolution des rites sacramentels* (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1952).

they are also professions of faith and elements of worship. They are the meeting point between an anthropocentric and a theocentric movement. Whoever forgets their anthropocentricity, their efficacious value for salvation, empties them of their substance, idealizes them, and reduces them to empty symbols, indeed, to mere auto-suggestive procedures. Conversely, anyone who forgets their theocentricity caricatures them into magic formulas, into recipes for individual salvation, devoid of religious grandeur. In either case Christ is mutilated, and His priesthood impoverished.

2. THE SACRAMENTS, INSTITUTED FOR MEN

(a) *Sensible signs of grace . . .*

Just as Christ became incarnate "for us men, and for our salvation" (Nicene Creed), the sacraments were instituted for men (which does not mean that they are not also "for God" insofar as they are means of worship). Now man is a sensible being in whom the body is both the support and the expression of the soul. Even our most abstract knowledge comes from sensible experience. It is therefore conformable to our nature that invisible grace should be communicated to us by language, that is, by the use of sensible signs.

. . . necessary for fallen man.

However, in the Garden of Paradise man received grace by direct infusion: the soul, obedient to God, had supreme dominion over all its corporeal and sensible powers. But original sin, the revolt of the soul against God, the source of its supernatural life and of its authority over all creation, merited the revolt of the inferior powers. Thenceforth man was enslaved to the senses even in his mind. To save fallen man, Christ therefore instituted sensible activities as vehicles of grace.

(b) *The sacraments of the Old Law*

Since the sacraments are so necessary ³ to man composed of body and soul, and particularly to fallen man, they had to exist even before Christ. In fact man's government, before as well as after the

³ As we have seen with regard to the Incarnation, there is no question of absolute "necessity." God is supremely free to save us as He pleases. This "necessity" is merely one of extreme fitness to which God in His wisdom condescends to assure harmony among all His works.

Mosaic Law, called for institutions which certainly seem to be sacraments of sorts: circumcision, the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, all the sacrifices of the Tabernacle and of the Temple. But are we justified in calling these rites sacraments, now that we have seen that the sacraments derive all their worth from Christ?

Christ is at the summit of history. He throws light on what preceded Him, as well as on what was to come after Him. No man is saved except through faith in Christ. The only difference is that some have been saved by faith in the Christ to come, and the others are saved through faith in the Christ who has already come. The same is true of the sacraments.

Certainly the sacraments in the strict sense are those of the New Law, and their power flows from Christ as their efficient cause. The sacraments of the Old Law also relate to Christ, but as their final cause: they announce and prefigure the Christ to come. The great difference between them and the sacraments of the New Law is that they do not physically contain grace (or more exactly, they do not procure grace immediately of themselves). But the sacraments of the Old Law do procure grace through the intermediary of the faith that they arouse and express.

(c) *The figurative value of our sacraments*

This regime of expectation and of figures has not completely disappeared even now. While our sacraments are truly bearers of grace, they are also figurative and mysterious. The Christ they contain is still hidden. We are still subject to the rules for wayfarers and exiles. When the day of the Lord comes on which Christ will show Himself openly and when God will be all in all, the sacraments will vanish. The time for signs, the regime of faith, will give way to the regime of direct vision and of possession without any intermediary.

(d) *The social value of our sacraments*

It is natural for man to live in society. His social condition is a corollary of his sensible nature. It is through our bodies that we communicate. The sacraments, sensible signs, are also social signs, signs of rallying and also signs of differentiation. They are particularly necessary to fallen men since the effect of original sin was not only to separate man from God but also to disperse men, to "wrest asunder all the families of nations" (Collect for the feast of

Christ the King). This argument also holds for the sacraments of the Old Law: their effect was to gather together and differentiate the people of God, who were the figure and the first-fruits of the Church of Christ.

3. THE COMPOSITION OF THE SACRAMENTS

(a) *The sacrament is a sign*

All catechisms define the sacraments as "signs that give grace." What is a sign? It is a being, the knowledge of which leads us to the knowledge of something else that can be known only through its intermediary.

However every sign of a sacred reality is not a sacrament. We cannot call the following sacraments: Biblical figures of Christ like the rock of Horeb, the pillar of fire, Abel, and Melchisedech; the Gospel parables, symbolic emblems such as the initials IHS, or the pelican. No, none of these signs are sacraments. Sacraments are sanctifying signs, practical signs, and not merely signs addressed to our understanding. Biblical figures bear the name of sacrament only if they have a practical and sanctifying significance, only if they are inscribed in a context that has connotations of worship as well as historical meaning. Examples of these are circumcision, the paschal lamb, and expiatory sacrifice.

(b) *A threefold objective signification*

We must not unduly restrict the sacraments' signification with respect to grace. On the contrary their signification must be taken in its fullest extension, together with its source and its end.

In the antiphon *O sacrum convivium*, St. Thomas has given perfect expression to this threefold signification with respect to the Eucharist, "the supreme sacrament":

*O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received, (this is the signifying sign)
the memory of His Passion renewed, (the sacrament is the sign of its past cause)
the mind filled with grace, (the sacrament is the sign of its present effect)
and a pledge of future glory given to us, (the sacrament is the sign and the first-fruits of its definitive fulfilment).*

This threefold signification considerably broadens the sacramental horizon. It refers back to the sacrament, in order to enrich and throw light on it, not only the Passion of Christ, but also indirectly all the Biblical figures of His Passion. Lastly, it gives the

sacrament its full scope as a mystery, as well as its eschatological and heavenly value.

(c) *"Matter and form"*

It is through the genus of sign that we must approach the very popular and much misunderstood analogy of matter and form. This pair descends directly from Aristotle's philosophy, in which it serves to explain the multiplicity and transformation of created beings. The idea, the form, of man is unique. And yet there are many men. This stems from the fact that the unique form of man is realized in many individual "matters." These two terms are essentially correlative, and it would be an error to solidify them, to identify matter with what is corporeal, and form with what is spiritual. For example, the "matter" of a discourse consists of the ideas on which it is based. The form consists of the words and the composition that go to make up its presentation. We must simply say, therefore, that in a created being matter and form distinguish a principle of relative indetermination and a principle of completion.

The matter of the signs that are sacraments consists of the sign roughhewn by man's spontaneous choice. The form is the completion of the sign by an intervention of God.

It happens that in Baptism and the Eucharist, the matter is actually a "material" element: water, bread and wine, which already indicate the respective signification of these sacraments—a bath, a banquet. The form is a more intellectual and precise element which determines the spiritual signification: the "formulas" pronounced by the celebrant to show that the bath is a rebirth and a consecration to the Three Divine Persons, that the banquet is a sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus.

However in the case of Penance, for example, we do not find any material element. And yet matter and form are still there. The matter consists of the penitent's acts. The form is the priest's absolution which completes and sanctions the remission of sins already begun by the penitent's actions.⁴

⁴ It would be better to say that the "matter" is a human action, rather than a material element: a bath for Baptism, promotion for Confirmation, a banquet for the Eucharist, judgment for Penance, the administration of a remedy for Extreme Unction, a contract of association for Matrimony, the collation of powers for Holy Orders. This more analogical presentation has the added advantage of better safeguarding the dynamic aspect of the sacrament, which is an action and not a thing.

Nevertheless, in every instance, the form that completes the signification consists in words, inasmuch as words are the most perfect sign possible, whereas gestures are often ambiguous.

(d) "*Res et sacramentum*"

Another classical but less common distinction throws much more light upon the knowledge of the sacramental sign. Its usefulness is revealed by these three apparently clear statements: The Eucharist is the sacrament of bread and wine; the Eucharist is the sacrifice of Christ; the Eucharist is the sacrament of Christian unity. These statements perplex the mind, making it suspect that in these three cases the word "sacrament" does not have exactly the same meaning.

Theologians therefore discern what may be called three degrees of real depth in the sacraments. On the surface, there is the *sacramentum tantum*, the sign and nothing more. This is the exterior rite constituted by the matter and form, which has no other purpose than to lead to something else that is more real. For example, in Baptism this would be the water and the baptismal formula; in the Eucharist it would be the consecration of the species; in marriage, it would be the consent of the husband and wife.

The *sacramentum tantum*, by the very fact that it exists, that it is not a mere appearance or a false sign (as in the case of a fictitious, invalid sacrament), produces an intermediary reality: *res et sacramentum*, a reality and yet still a sign. It is already a reality, indirectly visible through the *sacramentum tantum*, but having an existence of its own. In Baptism this is the character or mark, really impressed upon the soul. In the Eucharist, it is the presence of the immolated Christ. In marriage, it is the indissoluble union of the husband and wife.

The *res et sacramentum*, as we have said, is an intermediary reality, for its end is not within itself. It must culminate in a deeper, more definitive reality that is ordered to nothing else: the *res tantum*, the reality alone, the end of the sacrament that is in no sense an intermediary, that does not signify or produce anything else. In Baptism the *res tantum* is incorporation into Christ; in the Eucharist, the unity of the ecclesiastical Body; and in marriage, the representation of the union between Christ and the Church.

This distinction is not a mental picture: the three terms are easily separated in real life. Thus, the *sacramentum tantum* is transitory, whereas the *res et sacramentum* and the *res tantum* are lasting. It

takes only a moment to celebrate a Baptism, to consecrate the Eucharist, and to be united to another in marriage by the sacramental "yes." And yet baptism endures for all eternity; Christ remains present under the sacred species as long as they subsist; the union of husband and wife lasts until death.

Finally, the *res tantum* is not necessarily produced by the first two elements. A valid Baptism imprints a character, but does not produce grace if the baptized person persists in his sins. The baptized person loses baptismal grace without ceasing to be a baptized person, when he separates himself from Christ by committing grave sin. Christ is truly present under the consecrated species, but Communion does not produce its effect if it is received into a badly-disposed soul. Two sinful persons who want to contract a genuine marriage are indissolubly united by the sacrament, but they do not profoundly represent the union between Christ and His Church.

(e) *The sacraments, signs of faith*

This distinction between the *res tantum* on the one hand, and the *sacramentum tantum* and the *res et sacramentum* on the other, makes it possible for us to bring out an aspect of the sacraments that is often neglected, and to answer the most serious objection against Catholic sacramentalism.

We have already seen that the sacrament is an objective sign—of the Passion, of grace, and of future glory. We have also seen that the *sacramentum tantum*, the rite validly accomplished, always signifies and produces the sacred reality—an intermediary and not an ultimate reality—that is the *res et sacramentum*. This can also be expressed by saying that the sacrament acts *ex opere operato*, by virtue of the work accomplished. That is to say, the efficacy of the sacrament does not act in virtue of our subjective dispositions. It is an efficacious act of the omnipotent Christ.

Salvation is not primarily our work, but the work of Christ who "loved us first." It is a totally gratuitous gift. The work of salvation is not an interplay of free feelings. It is a solid, visible, sacramental ordering, bound to rites and easily recognizable. For the Church is not a nebulous, impalpable body, constituted solely by men's good will. She is a "mystical" body, but one that has solid foundations. She is a visible society, founded on the Apostles and the Prophets, with Christ as her cornerstone. She existed before us and now exists apart from us.

It therefore suffices that the sacraments be administered accord-

ing to the rites instituted by Christ and the Church for them to operate as if by themselves, *ex opere operato* (by virtue of the work accomplished), and not *ex opere operantis* (by virtue of the subjective merits and dispositions of the one who operates, whether minister or subject). And if the sacraments do work *ex opere operantis*, it is *ex opere operantis Christi* (by virtue of the will and the holiness of Christ, who operates infallibly within them).

(f) *Infallibility and freedom in the sacraments*

But then, how escape the reproach that this is practicing magic? Magic would consist in a formula that would give material forces the capacity to control spiritual forces and condemn them to operate outside of all morality.

We have seen that while the *sacramentum tantum* necessarily produces the *res et sacramentum*, these first two elements of the sacrament produce the *res tantum* only if the subject receiving the sacrament is well disposed. The sacrament that is really and validly administered always produces a sacred result. However, it does not always produce holiness. For holiness is necessarily free and voluntary, at least in a free and conscious adult.

In other words, while the sacraments are objective signs, they must also be subjective signs if they are to produce the final effect for which they were instituted. The sacraments of Christ, the sacraments of the Church, are also—or at least ought to be—sacraments of faith. Christ said to His Apostles: “Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned” (Mk. 16:15-16).

The rite is efficacious in itself, but it attains its ultimate end only if it is prepared and accompanied by words which express faith, and is embraced with a lively faith and heartfelt acceptance. To take part in the ritual of a sacrament without wanting to give oneself to Christ is not only to deprive the sacrament of its ultimate efficacy, but it is also a sacrilege because it contradicts the profound truth of the sacrament by an attempt to receive God’s gifts without rendering Him worship in spirit and in truth.⁵

⁵ It may also be added that the subject’s good will which allows him to benefit from the sacramental *res* is produced in him by an actual grace from God. Thus all magic is obviated, for God keeps His free initiative and is never constrained by the rite to sanctify a man against his will.

4. THE EFFICACY OF THE SACRAMENTS

(a) *The sacraments effect what they signify*

We have already broached this question in our study of the sacraments as signs. This is not surprising, for the sacraments "effect what they signify," that is their signification is an exact measure of their efficacy, and they produce exactly what they signify. Whence the importance of "form" from the point of view of efficacy, inasmuch as the form completes the signification.

But even this poses a twofold philosophical problem. First of all, sign and efficacy, in the natural domain, belong to two irreducible orders. The sign belongs to the "intentional order," the order of representation, of knowledge. Action, efficacy, belong to the order of "entitative being." A natural sign represents, but it produces nothing. Even a practical sign, like a sign of departure, has no action of its own. It produces (and this is only a metaphor) nothing else than knowledge, which the will alone transforms into action.

This reminds us of something we could easily forget: i.e. it is not natural for a sign to be efficacious; we know of no efficacious signs except the sacraments, precisely because the sacraments are divinely instituted and go beyond the natural order. Signification stems from essence; efficacy stems from existence. To join essence and existence, we must go back to uncreated being which transcends all the limits of being; we must go back to God Himself.

(b) *Instrumental causality*

A second question arises. Ordinarily, natural signs are more in the order of effects than in the order of causes: thus smoke is the sign of fire, and an animal's tracks are the effects of his passage. How can the sacraments be at once signs and causes? And besides, how can sensible signs be the cause of a spiritual and supernatural reality like grace?

This twofold difficulty is solved by St. Thomas through his theory of instrumental causality. The cause, strictly speaking, is the principal cause. But to achieve certain effects, the principal cause can put in motion a subordinate or instrumental cause. An artist will paint with a paintbrush. The artist is the principal cause, for he is the true author of the action whose final image he bears within him-

self: the artist actualizes a picture that he carries in his imagination. The paintbrush, which is inert in itself, is moved by the artist.

Thus the instrumental cause is first of all an *effect* of the action of the principal cause. But it is truly a cause. It does not merely transmit action, but leaves in the final effect something of its own form: the picture will differ, regardless of the artist's identity, depending on the quality of the brush used. And on the other hand, instrumental causality explains why the instrument accomplishes an action normally beyond its powers. It is elevated in its operation by the movement that the principal cause impresses upon it.

Let us apply this comparison to the sacraments. God is the principal cause of grace, since grace is nothing else but communion with divine life. But to communicate this spiritual quality to a creature wrapped in sensible being such as man, God makes use of the sensible being that is the sacrament. By the motion that God impresses upon the sacrament, He elevates it and makes it capable of producing an effect which is infinitely beyond its powers.

(c) *The interrelation of the sacramental instruments*

In the preceding outline, we have greatly simplified a series of relationships that is much more complex in actuality. It will prove useful to go over this once more in greater detail.

In order to save men, God has made use of an animate instrument closely united to Himself (such as the artist's right hand): this instrument is Christ, true God and true man in a single person. Christ in His turn, when He became invisible to men, chose to use an animate but separate instrument: the minister of the sacrament (a minister is nothing but an animate instrument). The latter also makes use of a separate but inanimate instrument: the sacrament. And the sacrament acts only through the intermediary of the body to reach the soul (just as the painter, his hand, and his brush act upon the imagination of the spectator only through the colors and the canvas of the painting).

How are these subordinate causes interrelated? The Incarnation unites God to humanity through Christ. Christ unites Himself to the sacraments first of all by instituting them and by choosing the Church to administer them (the two acts are included in a single command in the case of the Eucharist: "Do this in remembrance of Me." And in the case of Penance, with the words: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven

them"). In the sacrament of Holy Orders, Christ ordains a specific man to be, personally and within the Church, the minister of certain sacraments.

Finally, every minister, at the moment he performs a sacramental rite, places himself under the influence of Christ in his *intention*. By this act of will he submits to the causality of Christ and becomes His instrument. In this way too, magic is eschewed (the sacraments do not function by themselves), without endangering the objectivity of the sacraments. Their efficacy depends not on the personal holiness of the minister but upon his institutional and voluntary bond with the causality of Christ.

That is why the validity of the sacraments absolutely calls for the matter and the form instituted; the proper minister; and, lastly, the minister's intention to do what the Church does. This helps us to understand that the consecration performed by a validly ordained priest, even though he is a sinner or perhaps an unbeliever, is valid, and that Baptism can be validly administered even by a minister who is not part of the Church, providing this minister intends to do what the Church does. In such a situation, this "occasional" minister belongs to the Church, at least when he performs this act, which is considered seriously as a sacred act.

(d) *The physical causality of the sacraments*

Certain theologians, in order to explain how the sacraments, although sensible beings, produce spiritual effects, attribute only a so-called "moral" causality to them. As they see it, the sacraments would act upon God in virtue of Christ's actions, through the merit and value that Christ communicated to them when He instituted them. This explanation does not seem to agree with the obvious expressions of Scripture, the liturgy, and the Fathers. It also has the grave disadvantage of upsetting the order of causality. According to this theory, the sacraments would not produce grace under the influx of God, but on the contrary be merely appeals to God which He would answer by producing grace.

In such a hypothesis, God would enter the ranks of instrumental causes, and the sacraments would become superfluous entities. We therefore prefer to maintain the traditional notion of the physical causality of the sacraments. For outside of physical causality the sacraments have no causality at all, and the sacramental mystery is purely and simply done away with.

On the other hand, we must admit that the expression “*physical causality*” is rather unfortunate. We prefer to avoid using it, and to speak of direct or efficient (but also instrumental) causality. The notion of instrumental causality, moreover, suffices to explain that the sacraments, if they really *contain* grace, do not contain it after the manner of a recipient, but after the manner of an instrument or a sign that is temporarily elevated at the moment it is put into action by the principal cause. The sacraments contain grace after the manner of an incomplete and fluid being, which will be completed and at rest only in the soul that receives this grace and is informed by it; just as ideas are contained in words, but find their ultimate plenitude only in the mind that can receive them through language.

Finally, let us note that if the sacraments do not have “physical causality,” that is, real efficiency, it is hard to see how the sacraments of the New Law are really distinct from the sacraments of the Old Law. Both types of sacrament are signs of grace, but the sacraments instituted by Christ and flowing from Him are the only sacraments that are efficacious in themselves.

5. THE EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENTS

(a) *Character*

In three sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders), the *sacramentum et res* takes the name of *character*. This is an indelible and distinctive mark (whence its name) that impresses upon the soul a participation and a resemblance in the priesthood of Christ. It does not sanctify, but it consecrates with a view to the divine worship and organization of the Church. All this explains why it does not have to be repeated, and that the sacraments that confer character can be received only once.

Holiness depends upon human liberty and can always be destroyed by sin. That is a matter concerning the individual. Character, ordered to the social welfare of the community, does not depend upon the free will of each individual. We shall not go any further with this analysis which has already been made earlier with regard to the *res et sacramentum*: the existence of character as distinct from grace makes it possible to reconcile the morality of the sacrament with the solidity and visibility of the Church.⁶ Each sacra-

⁶ See A.-M. Roguet, O.P., “La théologie du caractère et l’incorporation à l’Église,” in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 32.

mental character will be studied later on in connection with the particular sacrament that confers it.

(b) *Grace*

While grace is less lasting than character, it is nevertheless the "principal" effect of the sacraments, the effect for which they were instituted.

We have already seen that sacramental grace is a Christiform grace. The action of the instrumental cause is not solely determined by the nature of the principal cause: the painting depends not solely upon the artist's creative idea, but also upon the quality of his brush. Grace, a participation in the divine life, is communicated to us only by Christ: it bears His seal. And Christ's grace is communicated to us only through the intermediary of the sacraments. Christ's unique grace is therefore diversified in its modalities by the matter and the form of the various sacraments as incorporated in the sacramental organism that we shall soon study.

Since all grace comes to us through the sacraments, it follows that all holiness and mystical life in the Church are at least rooted in the sacramental life. The term "mystical life" in its origins, signifies a life communicated by the "mysteries" that the sacraments are.⁷ True, the sacraments are first of all remedies for man, wounded by original sin. But sacramental grace does not merely cure, restore, and save. It is also elevating, life-giving, and edifying. There can be no authentic "Imitation of Jesus Christ" without a participation in the sacraments that transform us into His likeness.⁸ We see how artificial and regrettable is the current tendency to separate the mystical life from the sacramental life, and to confine the latter within a banal ritualism without any relation to the summits of divine union. Here again the encyclical *Mediator Dei* has given us precious light by showing the intimate relationships between personal devotion and liturgical piety.

⁷ See A. Plé, "Pour une mystique des mystères," in *Supplément de La Vie Spirituelle*, No. 23, November, 1952.

⁸ On this too often misunderstood aspect of sacramental doctrine see Dom Anselme Stolz' *Théologie de la Mystique* (Chèvotogne, 1948), Chapter 3, 2nd edition; also the articles of Mme. Lot-Borodine, "La grace déifiante des sacrements d'après Nicolas Cabasilas," in *Revue des Sciences Phil. et Théol.*, 1936, pp. 299-330 and 693-712; "Initiation à la Mystique sacramentaire de l'Orient," *ibid.*, pp. 664-675.

6. THE SACRAMENTAL ORGANISM

(a) *The seven sacraments*

It is of faith that the sacraments are seven in number, no more and no less. This number was not determined by theoretical or symbolical arguments. It was arrived at empirically, as the Church gradually took cognizance of her major rites.

A little thought will allow us to see how these rites differ among themselves. Some of them (Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction) call for a corporeal element that is not found in the others. Some of the sacraments are administered once and for all, and others can be renewed indefinitely. Baptism and Penance are each administered in a single, rapid ceremony. Holy Orders, on the other hand, calls for seven celebrations with an interval of time between each. Baptism, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction call for a preliminary consecration (which is less indispensable in the case of Baptism), but the sacrament is administered only in the application of the matter in question. The Eucharist, however, is accomplished in its very consecration. Almost all of the sacraments, even though they were prepared for by figures, were instituted in their entirety by Christ. Marriage, on the other hand, existed before Christ and was elevated by Him to the dignity of a Christian sacrament.

The sacraments, for all their diversity, all come under the analogical category of the efficacious sign. But the diversity is explained by the dissimilarity in the signs themselves: a bath, a banquet, an unction, a judgment, a contract, etc.

Inasmuch as efficacy with regard to grace depends upon signification, the diverse nature of the various signs determines the diverse modalities of the grace produced. Baptism confers Christian grace, but with a modality of newness, of identification with Christ dead and reborn. Confirmation gives a grace of prophetic testimony. The Eucharist gives a grace of intimate union, joy, and charity. Penance gives a grace of reconciliation, reparation, healing, of communion with Christ the Physician. Holy Orders give a grace of union with Christ the Priest, the Doctor, the Shepherd, etc., etc.

(b) *The order of the sacraments*

St. Thomas justifies the order in which the seven sacraments are enumerated by the various needs of the Christian life which they

satisfy, according to the relationship between the spiritual life and the corporeal life.

First come the three sacraments of Christian initiation, those that make a man purely and simply a Christian: Baptism corresponds to *birth*; Confirmation, which sanctions *growth* and the attainment of the adult state, corresponds to the Christian's social capacity; the Eucharist is the *food* without which life cannot be sustained and perfected.

Strictly speaking, these three sacraments could suffice. But in actual fact man is subject to deficiencies: Penance remedies the deficiencies of the soul, namely sin; Extreme Unction remedies the illness of the body and the spiritual repercussions of such illness.

These five sacraments are intended for the good of the person. There are two other sacraments, however, whose immediate end is the good of the community: Holy Orders, which provides the community with *leaders*; and Matrimony, which provides it with *members*.

(c) *The inequality of the sacraments*

It is clear that these needs vary in their urgency. Consequently there is a great inequality among these sacraments, in spite of their enumeration *ex aequo* in a single list. From the point of view of necessity, the first sacrament is Baptism, which is absolutely indispensable for salvation. Then comes Penance, whose necessity is relative to the accident of sin, which is very hard to avoid.

Confirmation and Extreme Unction are superior to Baptism and Penance, respectively, in that they perfect their effects.

Holy Orders is necessary to the good of the community, for without it the community would have no leaders and would be unable to celebrate the majority of the sacraments. This sacrament confers an unparalleled dignity.

Even though Matrimony is in many respects the last of the sacraments, it has a sublime significance that links it closely with the Eucharist.

(d) *The pre-eminence of the Eucharist*

But of all the sacraments, the Eucharist is the most important from every point of view.

Its superiority stems from the fact that it contains not only the power of Christ but Christ in person, in His Paschal mystery.

No doubt, the Eucharist is not necessary to salvation in the same way as Baptism is. We can be saved without receiving either the *sacramentum tantum* or the *res et sacramentum* of the Eucharist, but we cannot be saved without receiving the *res* of the Eucharist at least invisibly, namely incorporation into Christ within the Church. Those who die after having received no more than the sacrament of Baptism are positively ordered by this sacrament to the Eucharist.

All the other sacraments are ordered to the Eucharist for diverse reasons: Penance and Extreme Unction make us capable or worthier of receiving it; Holy Orders furnishes ministers for the Eucharist; Matrimony expresses in another language the same reality that is the unity of Christ and His Church.

Even in the exercise of worship the Eucharist completes the celebration of all the other sacraments: all ordinands and even all newly-married couples should receive Holy Communion at the conclusion of the sacrament they have just received.

The Eucharist is the center and the sun of the sacramental system. All the other sacraments flow from it and bring us back to it; to it they owe all their Christological realism. The Eucharist is the supreme Sacrament, the "Blessed Sacrament," or as St. Dionysius puts it: "the Sacrament of sacraments."⁹

7. THE 'SACRAMENTALS'

This hierarchical inequality among the sacraments and their bond to the Eucharist as their center indicate to us that the seven sacraments do not represent seven independent entities each having its own absolute value. Rather, they form themselves into a single sacramental world. And yet, despite their pre-eminence they do not suffice to exhaust the notion of sacramentality.

The Church has important rites which, although they do not bear the name of sacraments, strictly speaking, present most of the elements of sacramentality: the dedication of churches, funerals, monastic profession, various consecrations and blessings.

Can we not also include among the "sacramentals" all that constitutes the very fabric of the sacramental rites: the preparatory and completive rites of Baptism, the prayers and rites of the Mass

⁹ See in particular Dom Vonier, *The Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist* (Newman, 1956). (This "key" is that the Eucharist is totally sacramental, that it is nothing but a sacrament, the greatest of them all.)

outside of the Consecration, etc.? For reasons of canonical necessity certain rites in the sacraments have often been isolated as being essential and necessary. The other rites that accompany these essential rites in all ordinary celebrations are not to be looked upon merely as decorative accessories. They form the symbolical context that specifies and enriches the signification of the principal rites. They participate in a lesser but none the less real degree in the notion of sensible rites that are bearers of grace and unite us to Christ.

It can be said that these "sacramentals" operate not *ex opere operato*, nor *ex opere operantis Christi*, but *ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*. Now the Church is the beloved Spouse of Christ, charged by Him with administering the sacramental treasure that He has bequeathed to her. These rites will be efficacious for us in the measure in which we identify ourselves by our deep religious life with the Church that acts through them. Sacramentality can be exercised in a privileged way on seven precise points. This prolongation and fructification among us of the Incarnation, this sanctification of the whole universe must not be dismantled. The work of our salvation and, even more, the exercise of our worship overflows the narrow limits of the seven sacraments on all sides.

REFLECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Two pitfalls: rationalism and magic. Sacramental theology must be on its guard against two temptations that can easily become pitfalls.

The first consists in looking upon the sacraments as pure symbols without any other efficacy than that of symbols which ordinarily "speak to the mind." That is surely the temptation, and even the pitfall, into which the Protestants fell. We know "reformed" pastors who, after the celebration of their "Holy Supper," throw out into the poultry yard the bread that has not been distributed, even though the words of the anaphora have been pronounced over it. Undoubtedly these Protestants do not believe in the Real Presence. None the less this behavior legitimately shocks us. We Catholics would not even throw away bread that had simply been blessed or put to some liturgical use in the church.

Even with regard to the "sacraments" of the Old Law, the prophets and priests had another conception than we have toward ours. Thus, our Lord's powerfully realistic words concerning the

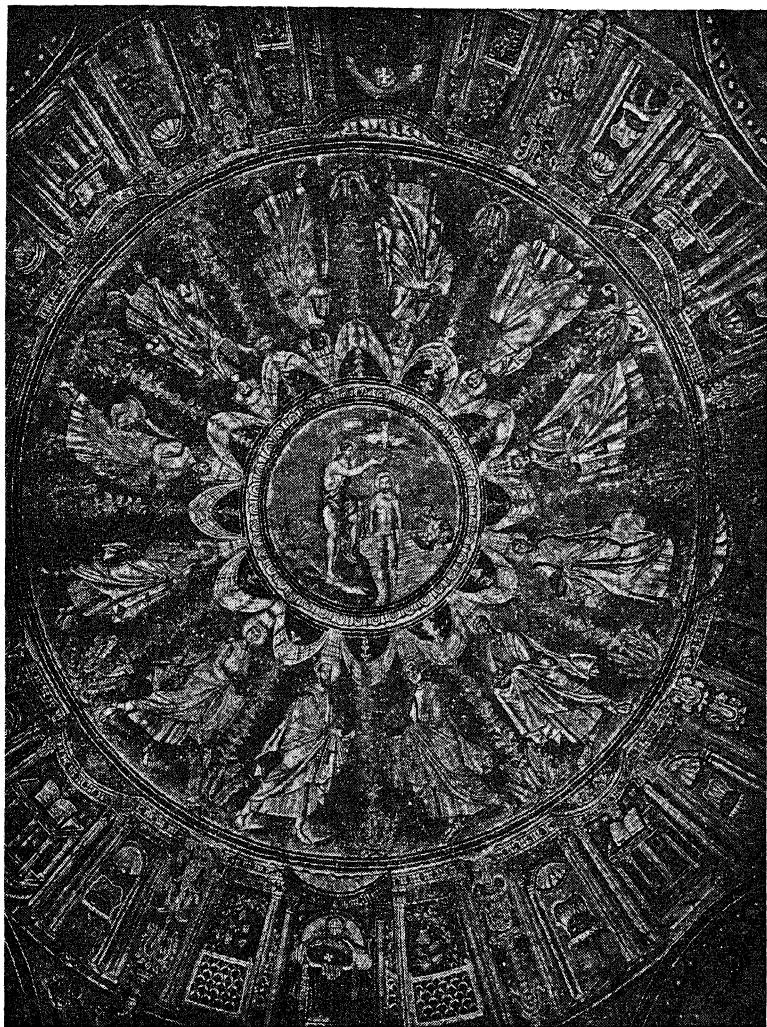
The baptistry next to the cathedral of Ravenna, placed under the patronage of St. John in *Fonte*, and commonly called the "Baptistry of the Orthodox," is considered to be an ancient thermal bath. It was transformed between 449 and 452.

The structure has a cupola in the center of which the Baptism of Christ is represented. Christ is plunged up to the waist in white and blue water, and is receiving the Baptism from John the Baptist, who holds a gem-studded cross with a spear. (Usually, the Precursor has a *pedum*, a pastoral crook. The gem-studded cross might be a restoration.) Above Christ's head is a dove representing the Holy Spirit. To the right is an old man holding a reed in his hands: he "personifies" the Jordan after the manner of an ancient water god. Belief in river gods had disappeared, but the iconographic theme remained and explains this personification.

In the lower area are the twelve Apostles. It is remarkable that in the earliest Christian iconography, the Apostles are always represented unshod and wearing sandals—"Do not keep . . . sandals, nor staff" (Mt. 10:10), whereas the Prophets are represented wearing shoes. The Apostles are carrying the crowns destined for those they are to baptize.

In the lowest circle, divided at regular intervals by strange and luxuriant plants, are architectural designs of two pavilions, each flanked by small porticoes. In the pavilions are thrones alternating with altars. Under the porticoes are niches in which are empty seats (for the elect), or gardens surrounded with grilles. This whole composition is a representation of paradise; the thrones themselves suggest the idea of the preparation of the Throne for the Last Judgment. The repetition of the four architectural designs (altars and thrones) might be an evocation of the four patriarchates.

Still lower, at a level not shown in this illustration, are decorative motifs formed by flowers and peacocks (the symbols of paradise and of the Resurrection).



sacraments that He instituted (cf. His dialogue with Nicodemus, the words of the Last Supper, the healings, etc.), suggest something altogether different from the rationalistic theory of "pure symbolism." We might go so far as to say that this theory is equally opposed to the age-old religious tradition of the whole human race.

Outside the rationalistic religions born of the Renaissance, the history of religions seems to give us no examples of gestures, things, or words used "liturgically" as simple language signs. Christianity is no exception to this tradition. However, since the God of the Christians is the true God, the efficacy of their religious signs of all types—and a fortiori of their sacraments—has a significance that goes far beyond anything envisaged by the other religions.

In their reaction against the strangeness of the rationalistic conception of the Protestants, it is quite normal that the defenders of Tradition in the sixteenth century should have stressed by every possible means the "efficacy" of the sacraments. In order to save what had so recently been imperiled, they thought of nothing else. And from this emerged another and totally different temptation and pitfall: that of considering only the efficacious aspect of every sacrament and of forgetting its signification. In its extreme cases, this is the pitfall of magic; the sacraments are no longer the "sacraments of faith," their signification is forgotten or set aside; they are only rites that operate mechanically, under a blind necessity.

Now the sacraments are essentially and fundamentally, although not exclusively, signs of faith. Christian rites are not magic rites. The disciples of Christ do not have any sacred forest, sacred mountain, or talismans. They worship God "in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:23). Anterior to their efficacy—and this anteriority is logical, not temporal—the sacraments signify something, they are "protestations of faith," signs of faith. They speak to us as believers, that is, to our faith, and our faith also speaks in them. When the catechumen plunges into the water which, according to the ancient symbolism, causes him to die and be born again, he intends to confess his faith in Christ who died and rose again, and to obtain from Him the grace of the death that puts the old man to death, and the grace of resurrection which begets a new life.

We must not, therefore, separate signification from efficacy in the theology of the sacraments. A sacrament that is no longer a sign is not a sacrament. Christ does not save us without us or in spite of us. He does not save us without the acquiescence of our

mind and without our faith's acceptance. He invites us to make the spiritual acts of our salvation by certain gestures and signs and according to certain specified rites: spiritual acts such as believing in Christ who died and rose again, feeding upon Christ, confessing our sins and expressing our contrition. But He does not let us make these gestures alone. Christ in a certain respect makes the effort in our place, He assumes our act, vivifies it inwardly, brings it to maturity, and confers upon it an efficacy that stems from God alone, even though Christ's action is always carried on in symbiosis with our own. In other words, our gestures are not mere "word-gestures." Christ takes responsibility for them in a certain respect. He intervenes within the act of faith made according to the rites, and He inwardly fecundates it with His divine grace.

Assuredly, the most characteristic and decisive act in every sacrament is the act of God, the gift of grace that God makes to us. But let us beware of taking only that into account, and of seeing in the Eucharist "only God coming down upon the altar"; of seeing only absolution in Penance, and so on.

For God's gift finds its place in each sacrament in a religious movement that goes from us to God. To go to Confession means first of all to repent and to confess one's sins. The gift of God, His royal pardon, enter into this movement. To celebrate the Eucharist means first of all to offer up bread and wine. The sacramental presence of Christ offered up enters the sacrifice of praise and gives it all its value. We tend too much to forget, in favor of the infallible gift from above, this contribution by the religious subject with which the heavenly gift is compounded (Yves Congar, *Christ, Our Lady, and the Church*, Newman, 1957).

This Monophysite tendency that Father Congar condemns is sometimes paradoxically accompanied by a certain Docetism which Father Philippeau, in turn, condemns. The Docetist tendency consists in despising the rites, gestures, and sensible developments that give a ceremony all its human signification and that are a means of instruction and help for the faithful. To quote Father Philippeau:

Docetism remains a heresy, and the sacraments are true. Baptism is not a mere semblance of corporeal ablution, the figure of a wholly interior purification; nor do the priest and the faithful merely pretend to eat at Mass in order to be nourished spiritually. The fight against counterfeits must remain the essential objective of an efficacious liturgical pastorate. But there are so many counterfeits to which we no longer give any thought that we scarcely dare draw up a list of them, especially as we might be suspected of heresy if the aforementioned counterfeits have juridically been accepted as common usage and have been deemed compatible with sacramental and liturgical validity . . .

Perhaps the most prolific source of these counterfeits, which end by completely debilitating the idea of the instrumental causality of sacred signs, seems to be the desire to hold to the strict minimum demandable for validity. Most of the regrettable distortions of the expressive symbolism that history reveals to us would never have come about if everyone had had the courage to do what was called for, instead of being content with the bare minimum, through economy, timidity, or because it was individually or collectively more convenient. (H. R. Philippeau, "L'évolution des rites sacramentels," in *Les questions liturgiques et paroissiales*, March-April, 1953, pp. 76-77).

Our author goes on to cite a few examples, some of which run counter to urgent hierarchical directives that are most deserving of attention. It is indeed true that the important thing is to form or change the "spirit" of Christians before forming or changing their acts. Actually, we do not claim that it is "through economy, timidity, or because it is individually or collectively more convenient" that there is so much contempt for whatever goes beyond the "strict minimum for validity." A deeper sentiment, the one that Father Congar rightly denounced, is at the root of this neglect. It consists in seeing and esteeming in the sacrament only the gift of God, to the exclusion of all human contributions. Above all it consists in failure to consider that the gift of God is implanted in the movement of man's heart so as to transform it, in some way, from within.

Both the "Monophysite tendency" condemned by Father Congar and the sacramental Docetism condemned by Father Philippeau stem from the same error, which consists in separating the divine and the human in the Incarnation and in isolating the divine.

Thus the only way of avoiding magic in the sacraments does not consist in neglecting the rites. On the contrary it consists in applying ourselves to these rites seriously, giving them all their amplitude and inward weight of signification in terms of faith. And that is not only in order to "avoid magic." It is a question of sacramental truth. In the sacraments no less than in the Incarnation, we must not divide the human and the divine. A human subject cannot receive a gift of grace the way a wall receives a coat of paint, without any active contribution on his part. The gift of grace that God presents us by means of the sacraments does not escape this law. On the contrary, the sacraments manifest this law in a sensible way by seeking to express visibly this twofold action of Christ and of the soul.

The fact that the soul sometimes receives grace *before* the reception of a sacrament does not invalidate this law. On the contrary

it signifies that in the movement of the soul that orientates it toward the sacrament and makes it receptive to what the sacrament signifies, Christ has already posited His action and anticipated the ordinary steps that infuse His grace. If a man has no faith or interior movement of the soul, he cannot receive any sacramental grace even if the rites are in perfect conformity with what they should be and the sacrament is authentically administered. It may happen that the sacrament is without effect by reason of contempt for the sacrament and grave sinfulness on the part of the subject. It may also happen that the effect of the sacrament is delayed until the soul finally becomes receptive not only in mind but also in heart to what the sacrament signifies and what Christ wants to give through it.

The difficulty posed by the case of the "Baptism of children" should not bring into question the intimate bond within the sacrament between the human (profession of faith) and the divine (the gift of grace). The Baptism of children is equally a profession of faith even though the child cannot yet make the act personally. The Church, in receiving the child into her bosom, expresses the child's faith in the sacrament. And the parents, in presenting their child at the baptismal font, take on the serious obligation of instructing him in the faith whose sacrament he has received. The act of faith expressed in this sacrament is merely delayed, and the child will make this act as soon as his powers are loosed and he is capable of doing it, unless he sins against the light. The grace of Baptism prepares him to make this act of faith. The case of the Baptism of children shows us that in all the acts we make, it is God who has the initiative. The grace of God comes first. Our good acts presuppose this grace.

Baptism poses another difficulty, as does Penance, the second plank of salvation. This difficulty can be expressed as follows: How can we expect the catechumen and the sinner to express their faith of their own accord when they receive these respective sacraments, since it is precisely God's gift of faith that they are seeking from the sacrament? It is because of this difficulty that we wrote earlier: "Wherever there is no faith, *no interior movement of the soul*, there can be no reception of sacramental grace." The catechumen who is preparing to present himself at the baptismal font may not yet have a fully formed faith, nor a living faith animated by the charity that springs from grace in the soul. And yet he would not advance toward this regenerative water unless there were a move-

ment of faith within him or a movement toward the living and total faith. Christ enters into this movement expressed by the baptized person's efforts and manifested by his "bath." And by means of the sacramental sign, Christ brings this movement to its conclusion by transforming it in His grace. And what we say of the catechumen's faith holds true for the contrition demanded of the sinner approaching the sacrament of Penance.

Sacramentality. The sacraments are not mechanical means intended to produce grace automatically without man's collaboration. They are "sacraments of faith." The only way to understand them and to receive (or dispense) them worthily is to consider them in the light of sacramentality in general, that is in the light of Christian symbolism.

To quote Father Dumont:

Symbolic thought grasps the bonds which unite the realities about us, and looks upon these realities as echoes, reflections, images of a transcendent reality. In the divine plan—which is at once creative and redemptive—the purpose and mission of sensible realities is to express this transcendent reality. [Symbolic thought] is a habit of thinking by calling to mind something beyond what is directly and immediately perceived . . . The meaning of this "mystery" tends to be blurred in Western culture in its quest for specific, rational expressions, precise juridical forms, and in its distrust of the indeterminateness and fluidity that symbolism always injects into thinking. Following this trend, our theology has limited the sacraments to a specific number, a well-defined domain, and within clear-cut boundaries. . . . The meaning of sacramentality has thus been blunted and almost lost. ("Grandes leçons actuelles de Byzance," in *L'art sacré*, May-June, 1953, p. 11.)

The rational and juridical mentality of the West has often reached the point of no longer considering the sacraments within the context of sacramentality or at least of symbolism, and of separating them entirely from all other "sacred signs," which were thenceforth called sacramentals. The tendency has been to consider the sacramentals as being almost without value, and to think of the sacraments as exhausting the whole domain of sacramentality. While it is perfectly legitimate to distinguish the sacraments from the sacramentals, this distinction must not be to the detriment of the sacramentals but to the advantage of the sacraments. It is simply meant to point out that the sacraments are major signs instituted by Christ, whose efficacy derives directly from Him and from His Passion. They are efficacious *ex opere operantis Christi*. The sacramentals were for the most part instituted by the Church, and they are efficacious *ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*.

However, there is a hierarchy of sacred signs among the sacraments, and also among the sacramentals. (We have already cited on p. xiv above the views of the third Canon of the Council of Trent's Seventh Session on the sacraments.) And the boundary between sacraments and sacramentals is sometimes harder to determine than the Western mind imagines. Episcopal consecration is held to be a sacrament in the strict sense of the term by many theologians, while other authors do not agree with this interpretation. Some writers look upon the ordination to the minor orders as sacraments, while others consider them to be sacramentals. After the thirteenth century, the consecration of virgins, which had long been considered a sacrament, could no longer be so considered.

But this does not mean that the consecration of virgins no longer signifies anything at all and that it does not bring signal grace to those who receive it. Likewise, while the dedication of churches, which is so similar to the ceremony of Baptism, can no longer be considered to be a sacrament, it retains a certain efficacy afterwards when the faithful go to pray in the consecrated church: under the aegis of this dedicated church they participate in the communion of the *sancta*, in the spiritual benefits in which all Christians are united. Finally, it is the same with the washing of feet on Holy Thursday, which was instituted by Christ Himself. Just because it is not a sacrament strictly-speaking, it need not be considered as having no value whatever.

The Western mind broke all continuity between the "sacraments" and "sacramentals." It likewise isolated within the administration of each sacrament what has appeared as "the indispensable minimum for the validity of the sacrament." A juridical category—the category of validity—has found its way into theology and has contributed its part in somehow dessicating the symbolic understanding of the sacrament. What was not necessary to the validity was thenceforth considered secondary, and there was a gradual trend toward private Baptisms, rapid Communion administered before and after Mass and even apart from any Mass, Extreme Unctions reduced to a single Unction, etc.

The evolution of the word *sacramental* throws considerable light on this matter. To quote A.-M. Roguet: "The present definition of the Code, those of contemporary theologians, and the whole trend of modern theology (cf. on this point Michel, Article "Sacramentaux," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*) is toward ap-

plying the word 'sacramental' to minor isolated rites, to the exclusion of ceremonies that accompany the sacraments properly so-called. These 'sacramentals' would be denied all efficacy, and considered only as ornaments, but obligatory by reason of the power Christ has given His Church in the dispensation of the sacraments (cf. Council of Trent, Session VII, Canon 13).

Now St. Thomas never speaks of the sacramentals except with reference to the sacraments to which they are related. That is what the term *sacramentalia* indicates. It does not mean "little sacraments" or "imitations of the sacraments," but "things related to the sacraments." A theology of the sacraments based on the notion of efficacy cannot help relegating the sacramentals to the extreme periphery of the sacramental orb. If on the contrary, in accordance with the dominant idea of St. Thomas, the sacraments are defined first of all as signs, the sacramental organism maintains a strong—even though analogical—unity, to which are integrated not only the sacraments of the New Law, but also those of the Old Law and the sacramentals ("Les sacramentaux," in the notes appended to the translation of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Les Sacrements*, Paris: Ed. de la Rev. des jeunes, 1945, pp. 375-376).

We shall therefore retain the ancient definition of the word "sacramental" that was used to define the "sacramentalia": everything that relates to the sacraments. This definition seems much more exact theologically and it makes possible the inclusion among the sacramentals not only of the celebrations that are not sacraments, strictly speaking, but also the ceremonies that surround the rites of the sacramentals; and likewise the "signs" that are not celebrations but simply sacred seasons, like Lent; or prayers like the "Our Father," or sacred texts, such as the whole of Sacred Scripture.

We could indeed show the relationship of each sacramental to the other sacraments, and most particularly to the Eucharist. To give but one example, that of the dedication of a church, it is clear that this ceremony in itself is solely a preparation for the Eucharist. It consists in consecrating a place, making it the *sacramentum* (to be translated here as "sacramental") of the assembly, and in consecrating an altar that symbolically represents Christ offering Himself up to the Father.

Analogous remarks could be made concerning all the "sacramentalia," beginning with holy water and including even the mystery of death and burial (in spite of the rich diversity of meanings included here). The same could be said of all the other sacraments, which are all ordered in one way or another to the Eucharist.

Let us not forget, however, that the Eucharist is the sacrament

of what we speak of today as "the Mystical Body," as well as of the "physical" or natural body of Christ. Father de Lubac's study (*Corpus mysticum*, Paris, Aubier, 1943) proves by means of a very impressive if not exhaustive documentation that until the ninth century the term *Corpus mysticum* always designated the real body of Christ in the sacrament (the word *mystical* then being equivalent to the word *sacramental*). This should make us realize, in spite of or perhaps because of the change in meaning that has since occurred, the close bond we should maintain between the two meanings. The bishop is the one who "makes the Body of Christ" in both senses of the word.

Thus we see the whole sacramental organism of the Church, starting with Baptism which is its foundation and ending with the Eucharist that completes and perfects it, take on meaning and unity. The sacraments and the sacramentals are not isolated monads independent of one another, as certain canonists, in what might be called an "atomic" theory, conceive them to be. On the contrary they form a universe whose two poles, the pole of origin and the pole of perfection, are Baptism and the Eucharist. Everything begins with Baptism, and everything is orientated toward the Eucharist. This is a truly theological conception.

In dealing with these matters the theologian must beware of being influenced by the canonists' ways of thinking, and by the invasion of their categories and notions. While the discipline of the canonists is legitimate and necessary, an abusive usurpation of theology by legalism has caused theology to lose its symbolic meaning and thought. The result has been the introduction into theology of the "atomistic" conception of the sacraments, and of categories like that of the "minimum necessary for validity" or that of the "option." While these categories are interesting and necessary in Canon Law, they must not become the keystone of a theological construction.

Juridical abuse has led to the consideration of the sacraments as inanimate "things" terminated in themselves, instead of as being first of all actions, and essentially symbolic actions. Juridical abuse has often made us forget strictly theological categories like that of the *res et sacramentum*—an intermediary reality between the *sacramentum tantum* and the *res* of each sacrament. Categories have been favored in which the juridical spirit reigned uppermost, such as for example the interesting categories (whose importance should

not be slighted) of *matter* and *form*. It should be noted, however, that what is called "matter" possesses, from the historical point of view, greater stability and greater liturgical importance (cf. H.-R. Philippeau, *op. cit.*).

The liturgical revival, thank God! is leading us to a more theological and hence a saner conception of the sacraments which, being "mysteries," belong primarily to the theologian's discipline. An expression frequently used in the liturgy, the "paschalia sacramenta," whose juridical definition is difficult, delights the theologian precisely because it evokes this mystery of unity. The "paschalia sacramenta" are neither Baptism nor the Eucharist taken separately nor even the two of them together, but the whole constellation of the sacraments (Baptism, the Eucharist, Penance, etc.) and sacramentals that gravitate around the celebration of Easter.

We might sum up our remarks by quoting a few lines from Father Chenu's article "Les sacrements dans l'économie chrétienne," which appeared in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 30, pp. 8-9:

Two notions reveal the key (to the economy of salvation) in their contents and their conjunction: the economy of salvation is at once a mystery and a history, that is, a mystery in history and history in the mystery of Christ. This bond is all the more striking in that the two elements in question are apparently contradictory. The word "mystery" is to be understood here not as the announcement of a transcendent reality, but as the objective transcendent reality of divine life, inasmuch as it is given to man to participate in it gratuitously. The word "history" here means that the gift of divine life is made through a process of preparation, unfolding, and consummation, in temporal forms that are not accidental episodes of an abstract operation, but the inward stages of an economy that is inseparable from the ages of man.

The Bible describes the unfolding of this mystery in history. God does not write a book (to be read) but a history (in which He is personally involved, and I along with Him). The liturgy is the extension of this history, and its fulfillment in figure and in reality. We are all agreed on this bond between the Bible and the liturgy: it is in this consubstantiality that the liturgy is defined.

How does the liturgy realize this statement? By a re-presentation (not a re-production) of the mystery, which, although it was accomplished once and for all, is nevertheless present today and in all times. This is the "sacrament." The economy is necessarily sacramental not only through the seven rites, isolated actions, vaguely related practices, but through an organic whole of words, gestures, hymns, prayers, and celebrations, that participate in the virtue as well as in the expression of the mystery, and compose an immense sacramental into which the Church pours her deepest life, and for which the whole universe provides the matter.

These principles should be applied to the theology of the "communion of saints," which is at once and indissolubly the communi-

cation of holy things and spiritual goods, and the communion of holy persons (cf. on this subject, "Communion des saints," *Cahier de la Vie Spirituelle*, Paris, Edit. du Cerf, 1945). These same principles should be applied to the particular case of the theology of indulgences, which is based wholly on the dogma of the communion of saints (cf. L.-M. Dewailly, "Les indulgences," in *Communion des saints*, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-72).

The life of signs. Since the whole symbolism of the sacraments is bound to "mystery" and to "history," we shall not be scandalized by the "invariability" of our sacred signs, which is real from one point of view, nor shall we be surprised by their evolution and development, which is equally real from another point of view. Invariability and development constitute the necessary dialectic of the life of our signs. Indeed, we can join with Dom B. Botte in "gratitude to the people of the Middle Ages for having preserved the canon for us in its purity, and for not having introduced into it their own personal effusions or theological ideas." And with him, too, we can hope "that we shall continue to imitate the common sense of these men, who had their own theological ideas, but understood that the canon was not a domain on which they could theorize at will" (*L'Ordinaire de la messe*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1953, p. 27).

We can likewise remark with Father J.-A. Jungmann that "the Church, by means of many attempts in the course of her long history, has striven to modify and improve the liturgy of the Mass, and has utilized the most diverse means of organizing and safeguarding the liturgy. She cannot renounce, now or later, this ever-pressing and never completed duty" (*Missarum solemnia*, Vol. I, Paris, Aubier, 1951, p. 26).

Is it possible to disentangle the arguments in favor of invariability and those in favor of development? Father Bouyer recently presented them in a remarkable study—"Principes historiques de l'évolution liturgique," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 10, pp. 47-85—to which we refer the reader. We shall merely quote this fundamental evidence:

"A liturgy is not made, any more than is a language. The history of Protestantism throws blinding light on this point." The notion of evolution can be applied to the liturgy only "in the same sense in which it is applied to all living beings, that is, to beings that have their own consistency, a consistency that is much more flexible than that of inanimate solids. But these beings must also have a

profound unity and permanence that is incredibly more resistant." As Father Bouyer sees it, the zone of movement, which is both flexible and variable, is situated between "two invariable poles: the general structure, or, if we prefer, the fundamental idea or ideas of the liturgy on the one hand, and on the other, the most primitive liturgical elements." And the evolution of this movement is characterized by continuity and by the irreversibility that corresponds with it.

Fixing his attention on the relation between the evolution of the liturgy and the development of dogma, Father Bouyer then shows, on the basis of many extensive and almost irrefutable studies, that "all religions present this law of the permanence of rites and the renewal of myths, of the inscrutable antiquity of rites, and the relative newness of myths. In a word, rites are not, as was formerly thought, posterior translations and clumsy materializations of myths. On the contrary, myths are edifying explanations of rites given after the fact. The direct result of this is that the ritual aspect of a religion, far from being more fluid than its ideological aspect, is incomparably more stable."

This surprising stability of rites which confirms, as against the pseudo-proofs of rationalists of past centuries, the law of consistency and permanence set forth in our preceding paragraph, could be illustrated by many examples taken from our own religion. This stability accounts for the fact, for example, that the Christian religion has, so to speak, cast itself into the molds of the rites of the Jewish religion, even when the latter, in becoming Christianized, had to change meaning (cf. Bouyer, *op. cit.*, p. 55), and even though the Jewish religion itself often adopted agrarian or natural rites (such as Easter, which was an ancient feast of springtime).

This stability also accounts for the fact that the Church did not hesitate to draw from the ancient natural reservoir of all religions, as our Lord sometimes did Himself. That is why Christianity has kept rites taken from the pagans, nay, even a tradition that was once dangerously superstitious, which we inherited from the Oriental, Greek, or Roman religions, among which the seed of Christianity developed. What actually happened in such cases was that Christianity simply baptized these traditions and gradually changed their significance. We have to pick out many examples of this in Father Cumont's posthumous work, *Lux perpetua* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1949). We might mention in passing the liturgical theme,

"lux perpetua," which is of Iranian origin (p. 21); the use of laurel, ivy, and the olive tree in certain cemeteries (p. 42), the custom of having mourners at burials, which is still the practice in Greece and Corsica (p. 20); the Irish Wake (p. 21); the service for the dead on the third and the fourth day (p. 37); certain customs of the funeral meal (pp. 40-41); the use of flowers on tombs (p. 44), the use of lighted lamps near the dead person before his burial (pp. 48-49); and other customs which have gradually fallen into disuse but that long remained "Christian." All of these were of pagan origin and, before they were "baptized," had a pagan, superstitious, idolatrous, or divinatory significance.

From this extraordinary stability of rites also comes the fact that every local Church, and for that matter the Church as a whole, preserves ancient social, quasi-profane rites which found their way into Christianity by altogether natural means. Since profane society abandoned these rites, we no longer know what some of them mean.

It is interesting to note in passing that while Christianity has widely adopted pagan feasts, customs, and practices, by simply "baptizing" them, it has always been reticent, if not completely adamant, in the adoption of pagan religious words. Cf. Christine Mohrmann, "Le problème du vocabulaire chrétien. Expériences d'évangélisation paléo-chrétienne et moderne," in *Scientia Missionum ancilla* (Nijmegen and Utrecht, Dekker and Van De Vegt, 1953), pp. 254-262. See also Yves Congar, "Bull. de théologie," *Rev. des sc. phil. et théol.*, Oct. 1953, p. 765.

This law of the stability of rites, however, does not signify that our celebrations—and even our sacramental celebrations—do not have a certain "zone of flexibility," or "free play" (J. Pascher, *L'évolution des rites sacramentels* (Paris: Ed. du Cerf, 1952); cf. also H.-R. Philippeau, in his article reviewing Professor Pascher's book, in *Questions lit. et par.*, March-April, 1953, pp. 67-82. This article gives many impressive historical examples of the changes in "form"—that is, of variations in verbal formulas—in the sacraments, that permit development under the authority and control of the hierarchy.

In the light of these few ideas, we shall study the historical evolution of certain liturgies, and the current development of what are generally called the "para-liturgies." We shall try to establish principles that make it possible in mission lands to retain certain nat-

ural or pagan rites, as has been done in the course of Christian history, and to "baptize" them. We shall also try to specify the risks involved in this transformation and the necessary vigilance of the missionary hierarchy in this domain. Consider for example such recent examples as the "quarrel over the Chinese rites," to which a definitive solution was not given until a few years ago.

From the point of view of ethnology, group psychology, and the history of religions, the dangers might also be pointed out that would result from complete disregard of the rites and customs of the peoples and religions to which the missionary presents himself. It may even be asked whether this disregard is apostolically possible. For example, in certain areas of central Africa where the missionaries had forbidden young converts to be circumcised, these converts were considered by the pagans as perpetual minors and excluded from the councils of the tribes and of the nation, and so the Apostolic Vicar finally authorized this custom.

Lastly, it will be asked whether it is necessary and desirable to impose our sacramental system upon converted peoples whose culture and civilization are totally different from those of the West. This is a question of a society's capacity to assimilate rites that are alien to its culture. A useful study could be made of ways of making up for a society's deficiency in this respect, and of what our rites signify and contribute to a society whose symbolism of worship is totally different. Obviously, this last point does not concern the sacraments in the strict sense. In this connection, we might note the fact that the "sacraments" are founded on basic natural symbols (the bath, anointing, eating, confession and forgiveness, a remedy that cures, hierarchy, a wedding feast). These symbols are found in all religions, and can be adapted everywhere.

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THE SACRAMENTS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION

Chapter II
BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

by Th. Camelot, O.P.

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Chapter II

First Part

BAPTISM

I. The Deposit of Faith

The theology of Baptism was elaborated day by day in the baptismal catechesis, which was closely bound up with the liturgy. It also developed in answer to practical questions such as the validity of the Baptism conferred by heretics. Here, more than ever, theological thought had to remain in very close contact with the two sources of Revelation: Scripture and Tradition. And above all with the very living form of Tradition that consists of the liturgy.

A. Scripture

1. THE GOSPEL

The Church received from the risen Jesus the command to baptize: "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:18-19; cf. Mk. 16:16).

(a) "Baptizing them. . . ." *Baptizare, baptizein*: this word calls up a concrete and very precise reality to those who hear it—*baptein*, "to immerse, plunge, soak" (this wholly material sense is seen in Lk. 16:24; Jn. 13:26; Apoc. 19:13). But this profane term had already assumed religious and ritualistic overtones. Every religion has its baths of purification (thus the religions of India, and Mandaeism). And the word *baptizein* is always found in our texts bearing a religious and ritualistic significance: thus, the Jewish purifications (Mk. 7:14; Lk. 11:38; Heb. 9:10), and above all the baptism of John.

"There came John in the desert, baptizing and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mk. 1:4; cf. Mt. 3:1,6; Lk. 3:3). The baptism that Zachary's son conferred in the desert is not without some analogy with the purifications called for in the Book of Leviticus, nor with the baptism of the proselytes (which came later). But it differs from them in that it is not a sim-

ple ritual purification from a *physical* stain (the contact of a corpse or of an impure being), but a baptism of *repentance*, the sign of a will to interior conversion which is attested to by the confession of sins (Mk. 1:5), and the desire for a better life (Lk. 3:10), "fruit befitting repentance" (Mt. 3:8). This baptism is "for the remission of sins" and for a new life, which demand more than simply being sons of Abraham (Mt. 3:9).

The Old Testament had already expressed the powerful and natural symbolism of this rite (Ps. 50:9; Is. 4:4) with a marked Messianic perspective: "In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: for the washing of the sinner, and of the unclean woman" (Zach. 13:1). Thus, the baptism of John prepared souls to gather together in the Messianic community: "The kingdom of God is at hand" (Mt. 3:2).

(b) Thus Jesus was not prescribing a complete innovation to His Apostles when He sent them out to baptize. He continued the baptism of John, just as He continued the Law, simply going beyond it and perfecting it (Mt. 5:17). The baptism of Jesus differs from the baptism of John in two essential points:

(1) It is a baptism "in the Spirit." "I have baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mk. 1:8). "With the Holy Spirit and with fire" are added in Mt. 3:11 and Lk. 3:16. (Cf. also Jn. 1:33.) And Jesus was to say: "John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5; 11:16). The Spirit had appeared at the birth of the world, soaring over the waters to make them fruitful (Gen. 1:2). He appeared at the Incarnation of the Word, forming the body of Jesus in Mary's womb (Lk. 1:35). He appears again at the birth of the Christian. He exerts an action in the soul of the neophyte as profound as the action of fire. He takes inward possession of it, and for the soul this is like a new birth which enables it to enter in fact into the kingdom which John merely foretold: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5).

(2) Not only is the baptism of Jesus a "baptism of repentance," it also demands *faith*: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mk. 16:16). Far from obviating the need for interior dispositions, the exterior rite demands and presupposes them. In addition to repent-

ance and the desire for a new life, faith is also needed. Faith comes first, and without faith Baptism could not bring salvation. Faith is the acceptance of the preaching of the Good News: "Preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). It is a cleaving to the mystery of Christ, to the mystery of God, "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:20).

Thus the Church has received this exterior rite from Jesus, namely a purifying bath accompanied by words (see Eph. 5:26). As a symbol of interior purification it requires of the neophyte interior dispositions of faith and repentance. However, it is the effective and efficacious action of the Spirit that brings about the radical transformation of the soul through a new birth (cf. I Pet. 2:2; Tit. 3:5).

2. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

From the very first days of the Church's history, Baptism appeared as a common and universal practice. When Peter was asked on Pentecost: "What shall we do?" he answered: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). And Scripture reports that "they who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

Throughout the *Acts* we find this rite: Philip the deacon baptized in Samaria (8:12 ff); Peter baptized in Cesarea (10:48); Paul baptized Lydia at Phillipi (16:15), and later on he baptized his jailer and all his household (16:33). Paul also baptized Crispus together with other Corinthians (18:8; see also I Cor. 1:14-16). And Paul himself had been baptized by Ananias at Damascus (Acts 9:18; 22:16). In all these texts, Baptism always follows the preaching of the word of God and the profession of faith (e.g. Acts 16:31-33; 8-37).

3. THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL

Out of the Church's everyday practice, St. Paul was already able to draw up the main outlines of a *theology*. (See especially Rom. 6:3-11; I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5, etc.)¹

Let us at least cite the Epistle to the Romans:

¹ Cf. A. Lemonnyer, *Théologie du nouveau Testament*, "Notre baptême d'après Saint Paul," pp. 104-108.

Do you not know that all we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? For we were buried with him by means of Baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ has arisen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be so in the likeness of his resurrection also. For we know that our old self has been crucified with him, in order that the body of sin may be destroyed, that we may no longer be slaves to sin; for he who is dead is acquitted of sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live together with Christ; for we know that Christ, having risen from the dead, dies now no more, death shall no longer have dominion over him. For the death that he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life that he lives, he lives unto God. Thus do you consider yourselves also as dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:3-11).

The life of Christ is symbolically but really renewed in the Christian: therein lies the *mystery* in the strict sense of the word. Baptism is an *immersion*: Christ, plunged in death, buried in the tomb, came forth again to live a new, resurrected life. The neophyte, likewise, plunged and buried in the baptismal water, comes forth "to walk in newness of life." We have been baptized, *immersed* in Christ. This is not merely a concise expression to indicate that the death. Baptism *really* plunges the Christian, not into water, but Christian is plunged into the water the way Christ was plunged into into Christ. In other words, it incorporates the Christian into Christ, making his new life a life "in Christ." "For all you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). When St. Paul said: "It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20), he was not translating an exceptional mystical experience, but the most elementary Christian reality.

The baptized Christian is immersed in the death of Christ. By dying with Him, his sins disappear, he is "dead to sin." The mystery of death and triumph accomplished on Calvary is renewed in him. Thus the Christian has been "nailed to the cross" with Christ (Gal. 2:19); he has died with Christ (Col. 2:20); he has "crucified (his) flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24). For having been "buried together with (Christ) in Baptism," he is also risen in Him and with Him (Col. 2:12; 3:1-4). Note that the text of Colossians 3:1-4 is read at the Mass of the Paschal Vigil. His life is a new life, a life "in Christ." The whole of Christian morality and spirituality have their origin in the living waters of Baptism.

Other texts of St. Paul sum up the same thing more succinctly. The Apostle reminds the Corinthians of their past sins and the shames of paganism. Then he adds: "And such were some of you,

but you have been washed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11). Baptism is a *bath* that *purifies, justifies*. We must take these words in their most explicit sense. Baptism is also the work of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:13).

We find the same teaching in Titus 3:5-7: "But when the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared, then not by reason of good works we did ourselves, but according to his mercy, he saved us through the bath of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit; whom he has abundantly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, in order that, justified by his grace, we may be heirs in the hope of life everlasting." This bath, accompanied by an effusion of the Holy Spirit, renews us and brings us forth to a new life—life everlasting, whose heirs we have been constituted. For as yet we are saved only "in hope" (Rom. 8:24), and Baptism opens up for us "eschatological perspectives on the life to come."

To conclude, let us add that the Baptism that "plunges" us into Christ to unite us to His death and Resurrection not only incorporates us into Him, but also incorporates us into the *Church* which is His body. It is through Baptism that we are introduced into the community of the faithful, as St. Paul reminds us: "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, . . . and we were all given to drink of one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13). And again: Be "careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism" (Eph. 4:3-5).

B. The liturgy

What were the details of the baptismal rite in the first days of the Church? How were the three thousand persons in Jerusalem baptized by the Twelve on Pentecost (Acts 2:41)? Was it by immersion or aspersion? We have no idea. We are better informed about Baptism from the middle of the second century onward. St. Justin (*Apol.* I, 61) briefly describes the ritual of Baptism in Rome around the year 150. In the early part of the third century Tertullian in Carthage (*De baptismo*), St. Hippolytus in Rome (*Apostolic Tradition*) furnished detailed information. By the fourth century, we were given a complete picture of this sacrament thanks to the baptismal catechesis of the Fathers: St. Cyril in Jerusalem, St. Ambrose in Milan (*De mysteriis* and *De sacramentis*), St. Augus-

tine in Hippo, etc. explained to the neophytes the rites of the sacrament they had received. Then came the *Sacramentaries*—the Leonine, Gelasian, and Gregorian rituals. The definitive editing of these rituals came rather late, but they contain some ancient writings.

The rite therein described is practically the same as the one prescribed in our modern rituals for the Baptism of adults. The Baptism of infants is simply an abbreviation of this rite. But the present-day ritual gathers up in a single ceremony what was formerly extended over a period of several weeks, during the whole period of Lent. Actually Lent, the preparation for the Paschal mystery, is first of all a preparation for Baptism, the supreme Paschal sacrament.

1. THE PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM

(a) Our present-day Baptism begins at the threshold of the Church, by the recalling of the rite of enrollment into the catechumenate. The convert comes to be instructed, hence he asks the Church to give him faith. Sin has made him the prey of demons, and a first exorcism puts them to flight at the same time that Christ takes possession of him for the first time by his being marked with the Sign of the Cross. Moreover, the "salt of wisdom" will henceforth preserve him from all corruption.

(b) Having decided to receive Baptism, at the beginning of Lent the catechumen asked to be inscribed among the *competents* (that is, among those who asked for Baptism), and of the *illuminands* (those who were preparing to be "illuminated" by Baptism). The entire holy season of forty days was spent in becoming better instructed and better prepared. There were more frequent meetings, some bearing the name of *scrutinies*: at first there were only three such meetings, but in the era of St. Gregory, there were seven scrutinies when the faithful were invited to give their opinion on the future Christians. For the whole Church has an interest in the admission within her ranks of new children. During these scrutinies, there were certain solemn *exorcisms*: prayers, prostrations, anointings, the imposition of hands. This was a combat against the devil, for the Church never ceases multiplying her assaults against him. These successive exorcisms have been gathered one after another into our modern ritual, whence come the repetitions and apparent complexity of the present rite. The Baptism of infants has retained only one exorcism.

(c) On the Wednesday of the third week of Lent, the Church in a more solemn scrutiny (*maius scrutinium*), surrendered the treasure of her faith to her catechumens. With great solemnity, the four Gospels were presented to them one after the other; they were taught the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer, and given commentaries upon them; as the catechumen entered the church, he (or his godparents) recited the Creed and the Our Father.

(d) Finally, on the morning of Holy Saturday—there was no Mass that morning, since the Paschal liturgy was to take up the whole night—the Church prepared the catechumens for the ultimate combat. A final and solemn exorcism, the rite of the *Ephpheta*, reproduced Jesus' gesture loosing the tongue and opening the ears of the deaf-mute. And the candidate was called upon to loudly proclaim his faith.

(e) And since he was about to make a supreme assault upon the devil, he was anointed with oil like an athlete preparing for combat. Here indeed was the decisive battle. Having been stripped of his clothing, the catechumen turned toward the West, the region of darkness and the kingdom of Satan, and publicly renounced Satan, his pomps (all the pomp of ancient civilization, imbued to the marrow with paganism), and his works. In certain churches of the East (Antioch, Jerusalem), the candidate turned toward the East, whence comes the light, and proclaimed his belonging to Christ: "Christ, I cleave to Thee." Do the children who nowadays renew the promises of their Baptism at solemn Holy Communion realize the ancient tradition to which they are heirs?

That completed the preparation for Baptism, begun by entering the catechumenate, prolonged during the whole period of Lent by the scrutinies, prayers, and exorcisms, and now terminated on Holy Saturday morning by the anointing of the catechumens and their renunciation of Satan. All this has been summarized and abridged in our modern rituals, but the broad outlines are still visible, even in the Baptism of infants.

2. BAPTISM IN THE STRICT SENSE OF THE WORD

On Holy Saturday night the great Paschal Vigil began in the Lateran Basilica. After the blessing of the Paschal Candle, the symbol of the risen Christ, the conqueror of darkness and death, the reading of the great baptismal "prophecies" called to the catechumens' minds the whole Old Testament, the figure of the New,

the whole mystery of salvation into which they were about to be initiated.

When these final lessons had been taught, the pontiff, the clergy, and the catechumens went in procession to the baptistery, which was a structure separate from the Basilica. (We still make this procession to the baptismal fonts in the liturgy of Holy Saturday, and in the ceremony of Baptism we go inside the baptistery.)

Once the baptismal water had been consecrated (in a Preface which is among the most beautiful texts of the liturgy), the bishop then proceeded with the Baptism. Since Baptism is the sacrament of faith, the candidate was interrogated on his faith in the Three Persons, in the Father who created us, in Christ who was born, who died, and who rose again for us, and in the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. In answer to the triple interrogation, the person being baptized answered three times: *Credo*—"I believe"; and each time the pontiff immersed him in the holy font or poured over him the water flowing from the fountain in the center of the baptistery. Now he was regenerated, "reborn," in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Welcomed by his godfather after leaving the font, the neophyte passed into a neighboring chapel, the *consignatorium*, where the bishop anointed the top of his head with the holy chrism, the royal and priestly unction, and the sign of the Christian *character* that he had now received—the mark of Christ that qualified him to take part in Christian worship. Then he was clothed with a white garment, the striking symbol of the purity and light he had received, the nuptial robe for the banquet of the Lamb to which he would soon be invited. He continued to wear this garment during all of Easter Week, the week of white vestments *in albis*.

The neophytes re-entered the Basilica in a solemn procession, to the singing of the Litany of the Saints. The Mass of Easter morning began at once, during which they made their first Holy Communion. In certain churches (Milan, Carthage), they were then given a little milk and honey to eat, the food of "little children" (for they were now newborn babes in the Church, see I Pet. 2:2), the symbol of the promised land "that floweth with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8), into which they had just been spiritually introduced.

II. The Theology of Baptism

When the believer thinks about Baptism, the object of his faith, as it is given in Scripture as well as in the everyday practice of the Church, he is quite naturally led to make a distinction between the *sacrament* itself, the *subject* who receives it, and the *minister* who confers it.

A. The Sacrament

In the sacrament itself, we must also distinguish between the sensible *rite* (the ablution of water accompanied by a formula), and the *hidden reality*, grace, of which the rite is both the sign and the cause. *Sacrum signum*, sacred sign; *sacrum secretum*, *res sacrata*, sacred and secret reality: this distinction, which stems from St. Augustine, has been taken into the great Scholastic syntheses.

1. *The sacrament in the strict sense*: Signum sacrum

The sacrament in the strict sense, the sacred, sensible rite, is the ablution of water accompanied by a formula (see Eph. 5:26). Theology designates these two elements by the terms *matter* and *form*. Form specifies and determines the matter: thus, the words of the ritual give the ablution its meaning and its scope. The Church has sanctioned this comparison in her official documents (Council of Florence, 1439, Decree for the Armenians, Denz. 695; Council of Trent, Session XIV (1551), Chapter 2, Denz. 895). And the terms apply most aptly to the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, without doing violence to the reality of things.

(a) *The matter*

The matter of Baptism is *water*. It was Christ who chose it, although He might well have used another element as the efficacious sign of our sanctification. But the theologian may legitimately seek to justify this choice and to discover the reasons for it. We are dealing here with a very expressive *symbolism* which had already been stressed in Scripture:

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed:
Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow (Ps. 50:9).

And I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed (Ez. 36:25).

In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: for the washing of the sinner, and of the unclean woman (Zach. 13:1).

Baptism is the sacrament of our regeneration and of our birth to the spiritual life: no life is possible without water. Water washes and purifies, just as Baptism washes and purifies us of our sins: water refreshes, just as Baptism calms the ardor of concupiscence. Water is transparent and luminous, just as Baptism, the sacrament of faith, is an *illumination*, a *phôtismos* in the ancient language of Christianity (Heb. 2:4; Justin, *Apol.* I, 61:12; Clement of Alexandria, *Pedag.*, I, 6, etc.). Lastly, as we have already seen, immersion in the baptismal water is the expressive symbol of the mysteries of the death and Resurrection of Christ, in which we have been justified (see Rom. 6).

Thus our sanctification—and the whole of Christian worship—is carried out by means that are very humble and simple but also very expressive, because they are very natural, borrowed from our daily life, rooted in created nature. In the sacraments, the whole of nature is an instrument of salvation, just as in the liturgy it is a means of praising God.

Having chosen water, Jesus made it apt for this work of sanctification. At the moment of His Baptism in the Jordan, the contact of His most pure flesh gave water the power to regenerate and purify. The Fathers also like to think of the water that poured from Jesus' open side, together with His blood (cf. Jn. 19:34). All the sacraments receive their virtue from Calvary, and communicate to us the redemptive grace of the blood shed on the Cross. "It is in the virtue of Christ's blood that water receives its purifying power" (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 66, art. 3, ad 3).

While we must under normal circumstances use water solemnly consecrated on Holy Saturday or on the eve of Pentecost (Canon 757, No. 1) for the conferring of Baptism, in case of necessity it is permissible to use any water whatever.² For water does not receive its sanctifying power from this consecration, and we should beware of accepting literally the expression of certain Fathers who say that

² The moralists specify—and we can readily understand why—that this water must be *natural* and *pure*: fresh water or sea water, spring water or rain water, melted snow or ice, distilled water, or mineral water. Any water that was not natural or any mixture that was no longer water would be invalid matter.

the baptismal water *contains* grace or even the Holy Spirit. These benedictions that add to the solemnity of Baptism, serve to arouse the devotion of the faithful, and to instruct them, and also to dispel the malice of the demons who might try to prevent the salutary effect of the sacrament.

Thus theology has succeeded in clarifying the question as to whether the material element of the sacrament *contains* grace. Obviously this conception, as held by the great minds of the Middle Ages, was oversimplified. Water, even when it is consecrated, is only an inert element. What makes water a sacrament is the *use* made of it: ablution or immersion. When water is lying in the baptismal basin, it cannot be said to possess a latent presence of God's power. This sanctifying power is exercised only when the *sacrament* is applied. We might say that this power flows with the water and passes into the man. The sacrament consists in the water poured at the same time that the minister pronounces the formula. It is something complex and living, fragile and fleeting as life itself. In a few instants, great things are accomplished.

From the start, the usual practice was to baptize by *immersion*. That is what the word "baptize" means, and it provides the most expressive term for the rite. However, this immersion was not always complete. Baptism by *infusion*, already mentioned in *Didache* 7:3 (end of the second century?), and later by St. Cyprian (255), was commonly administered to the sick. Even in the thirteenth century, immersion was the "most common" practice, and St. Thomas was obliged to justify on the basis of practicality the baptism by infusion that has since been the only one used in the West. Immersion is still common in the Eastern Churches, and the Code of Canon Law authorizes this diversity of practice (Canon 758).

Infusion is performed on the head, which is generally considered to be man's noblest part, the part where life is supposed to reside.

It is absolutely accidental that this immersion—or infusion—is performed in three movements. This is an ancient practice whose symbolism St. Augustine, among others, has widely exploited and which is still retained in the ritual. But that has no effect on the validity of the sacrament. Faith in the Blessed Trinity is adequately expressed by the words, which are the *form* of the sacrament. And a single immersion could just as well symbolize the unity of God.

(b) *The form*

The use of water (in immersion or ablution) must be accompanied by a formula that specifies and determines its meaning. Now Baptism is a "bath of water by means of the word" (Eph. 5:26). Without this word, the sacramental gesture would be only an empty rite, without meaning or efficacy.

When Jesus sent His Apostles "to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, did He intend to dictate to them the precise terms of the sacramental formula? Exegetes argue about it, and prudent minds incline toward the negative. Nor is it forbidden to think that Baptism may have been administered for a while "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (see Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; *Didache* 9:5), previous to the Trinitarian formula, or concurrently with it. The Church has the power to effect certain modifications in the rites of the sacraments, providing their substance is left unscathed, *salva eorum substantia* (Counc. of Trent, Sess. XXI, ch. 2, Denz. 931). Be this as it may, the formula of Baptism in the name of the Three Persons, of which we can find indications in Apostolic writings, was attested to beyond any doubt as early as the year 150 by St. Justin (*Apol.* I, 51:3) and by the *Didache* (7:3), and thenceforth it alone was universally used.³

Into these words passes all of the sanctifying power of the sacrament of Baptism. This power passes through the *minister*, a very lowly instrument like the water, but an intelligent and free instrument who acts personally: "I baptize thee . . ." But the prime agent is *God* (the Trinity), the sole source and primary cause of all sanctification. "*In the name* of the Three Persons," that is, in their name and by their authority, in virtue of their power—but this also signifies consecration and belonging to the Three Persons, *in whom* the neophyte is as it were immersed (cf. Rom. 6:3). And the use of the singular, *In the name . . .*, is an affirmation of faith in the unity of nature, of power, and of operation within the distinction of the Three Persons, designated here by their proper names, Father, Son, and Spirit. Thus the one and triune God is present at

³ It seems, judging from many ancient texts (Hippolytus, St. Ambrose, etc.) that at certain periods the catechumen's profession of faith accompanying the threefold immersion took the place of a sacramental formula. The Eastern Churches still use a formula that is slightly different from ours: "This servant of God is baptized—or "Let this servant of God be baptized"—in the name of the Father, etc."

the Baptism of the Christian, as He was at the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan.

These words are supremely efficacious by themselves. Even when they are addressed to a small child incapable of understanding, they immediately *produce* what they *signify*. For their power comes from the power of the Word through whom all things were made (see Jn. 1:3).

2. *The effect produced*—Res sacra, sacrum secretum

The effect produced, the sacred reality hidden under the sensible sign is at once *one* and *complex*, and theology tries to analyze it with exactitude. With the help of Scripture and the liturgy, we shall strive to see this effect through the sign and in the light of the sign.

(a) *Baptism is a bath of purification*

When St. Paul was reminding the Corinthians of the licentiousness of their past life, he said to them: "And such were some of you; but you have been washed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11). Elsewhere he says that Christ sanctified His Church, "cleansing her in the bath of water by means of the word" (Eph. 5:26; cf. Heb. 10:22).

(1) *Baptism remits sins*: By the Baptism of John, "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mk. 1:4), sins were not remitted directly, but the sinner was inspired to do penance. By the Baptism of Jesus, the sinner, buried in Christ's death, dies to the old life of sin and begins to live in the newness of grace: he is "dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11). The Passion and death of Christ are the universal remedy for all sins. In order to be forgiven, the sinner must have a movement of profound repentance; but this movement leads him to the foot of the Cross and would be incapable of obtaining the remission of sins for him without his faith in the Passion of Christ and at least the desire to commune with it through the sacrament. Thus Baptism, which acts through the power of Christ's Passion, represents ("renders present") the reality of this Passion and its salutary action, and remits all the soul's sins, personal sins as well as original sin.

In the fifth century, the Pelagians denied original sin and affirmed that Baptism is given only for actual sins, and this forced them to make a very subtle exegesis in order to justify the Baptism

of infants. But in actuality, the grace of Baptism—the grace of the Passion—has the power to reach to the depths of the nature we inherit from Adam, to wash and radically cleanse away this original stain.

Human generation transmits only original sin; man freely adds his own personal sins. But “where the offense has abounded, grace has abounded yet more” (Rom. 5:20). Baptismal regeneration wipes away all sin. When an inveterate sinner leaves the baptismal font, he has regained all the innocence and purity of a newborn child (see I Pet. 2:2; and St. Cyprian, *Ad Donatum*). “If then any man is in Christ, he is a new creature” (II Cor. 5:17).

(2) *Baptism remits the punishment due to sin.* In addition to guilt, sin brings with it a penalty, a debt to be paid in reparation for the wrong done. The severest of these punishments is the deprivation of the vision of God and eternal damnation; and at the very least it means purgatory. Baptism totally remits these punishments due in the life to come, and this again by the application of Christ's redemptive death. Having died with Christ, the baptized person communes in His death. As a member of Christ he participates in His Passion as if he himself were suffering the Savior's death, which is capable of making satisfaction for the sins of all men. Thus, the person who has just been baptized no longer needs to make satisfaction for his sins, and no personal penance can be imposed upon him. Christ has made satisfaction for him, or rather he himself has made satisfaction in Christ. The greatest sinner who dies immediately after Baptism at once enjoys the vision of the divine essence. “*This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise*” (Lk. 23:43).

(3) As for the *temporal punishment* due to sin, we know from experience that the baptized person is not freed from any of the consequences of original sin—suffering, sickness, and death; ignorance and concupiscence—nor from the bad habits, personal or hereditary blemishes, that are the consequence of actual sins. And yet St. Paul writes that “our old self has been crucified with (Christ), in order that the body of sin may be destroyed, that we may no longer be slaves to sin” (Rom. 6:6). How can these apparently contradictory facts be reconciled?

The ultimate reason that explains the effects of Baptism is our union with Christ: the fact that we are one body with Him. Now the body He assumed was capable of suffering and was mortal. Like Him, therefore, we must suffer and die. “We are . . . heirs in-

deed of God and joint heirs with Christ, provided, however, we suffer with him that we may also be glorified with him" (Rom. 8:17). Our body remains subject to suffering so that, like Jesus and with Him, we may merit glorious impassibility and resurrection. The Christian, being a member of Christ crucified, must carry his cross each day after Him; he does not expect heaven upon earth, as if the progress of technics could end suffering forever. It is only in the final resurrection that we shall be completely liberated. There exists in the heart of the baptized person a necessary orientation toward the last things, i.e. an eschatological tension.

Concupiscence and temptations exist so that we may be obliged to fight and to win our crown, just like Jesus Himself, who was also "tried as we are in all things" (Heb. 4:15). The whole life of a Christian must, like Jesus' life, be an unceasing battle, in preparation for victory.

It should however be added that this concupiscence, this inclination to evil and difficulty in doing good is diminished by Baptism, "so that man be not overcome by them" (IIIa, q. 69, a. 4, ad 3). Concomitantly, the grace of Baptism gives the Christian the power to triumph over these assaults against which the unbaptized person remains unarmed.

(b) *Baptism is a bath of regeneration and renewal*

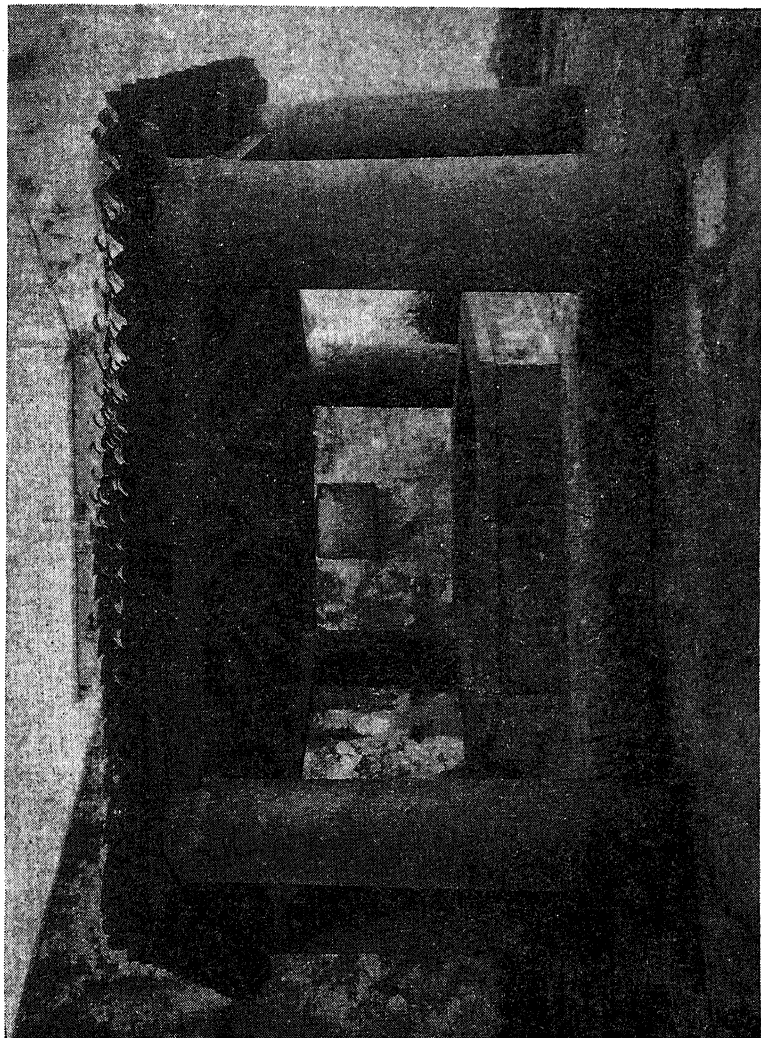
"But when the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared, then . . . according to his mercy, he saved us through the bath of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit; whom he has abundantly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, in order that, justified by his grace, we may be heirs in the hope of life everlasting" (Tit. 3:5-7). Baptism is not simply a remission of sins that purifies the soul and then leaves it in its nakedness. Baptism is also an infusion of grace. Let us explain a little further this text of St. Paul's.

The baptized person is *regenerated* and *renewed*. To his birth in the flesh that made him a son of men, is added a new birth "of water and the Spirit" (Jn. 3:5), that makes of him "a new creature" (II Cor. 5:17), or more exactly, a child of God partaking of the divine nature by adoption (II Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5). Elsewhere St. Paul speaks of "grafts" (Rom. 11:17-24), thereby indicating the new sap that rises in the soul of the baptized person: in becoming a child of God the neophyte has received

There are still a number of baptisteries extant that date back to the fifth century or earlier: the baptisteries of the Lateran Cathedral (430); of Fréjus; of Aix-en-Provence; the so-called "Arian" baptistery in Ravenna (early fourth century); the baptistery of Djémila; the ancient Cuicul in North Africa, that has a beautiful stone baldachin over the baptismal pool, and a series of recesses in the circular wall that were used as vestries, etc.

The baptistery here shown is at Aquilea, which was once a very important bishopric near Trieste. It is the baptistery of the "Church of the pagans." It is of the utmost simplicity, and does not even boast a stairway into the pool, nor has it any vestry.

We should try to picture these baptisteries during the beautiful ceremony of the "blessed Easter night" when the bishop, escorted by his priests and deacons, baptized the long procession of catechumens that were brought before him.



Bronze baptismal vessel, known as the St. Bartholomew of Liège, the work of Renier de Huy (1111–1118); art of the Meuse valley.

This vessel is not made of stone but of very handsome copper. This has a symbolic significance, and is intended to call to mind “the sea of brass” (IV Kings 25:13-16), and the “brazen laver” Moses was ordered to make (Ex. 30:18).

A series of scenes succeed each other around the basin, rising out of a background in which shrubs represent the earth. These scenes are: The preaching and Baptism of penance of St. John the Baptist, the Baptism of Christ (shown here), the Baptism of the centurion Cornelius by St. Peter, the Baptism of the philosopher Crito by St. John the Evangelist.



sanctifying grace, a new nature, that is grafted on his human nature and raises it to a higher state so that it may produce divine acts. In Biblical language, we say that such a man is *justified*, that is, agreeable to God. Together with grace, he receives the *virtues*, which are infused into his natural faculties: the theological virtues by which to produce the vital acts of this divine life, and the moral virtues by which to live his human life divinely. He also receives the *gifts* of the Holy Spirit. Thus, our whole supernatural organism, in its riches and complexity, has its source and origin in Baptism. The baptismal water, by its luminous transparency, symbolizes the splendor of grace as well as the spiritual fruitfulness that will blossom forth in the Christian's virtuous activity.

The reason for this gift of grace in Baptism is once again the fact that Baptism incorporates us into Christ, the source of all grace. From this source and head all grace and virtue flow into us. "We saw his glory . . . full of grace and of truth, . . . and of his fullness we have all received, grace for grace" (Jn. 1:14-16).

Even infants receive this splendid treasure of the virtues: they are incapable of producing acts of virtues, but they have the *habitus* of virtue, i.e. the permanent faculty of performing these acts, just as they have intellect and will even though they cannot yet produce the acts proper to them.

It will be noted that the effect of baptism is the same in all baptized persons, at least with regard to children baptized in the faith of the Church. In adults, this effect is *limited* by their personal dispositions, and each one participates in the grace of renewal in proportion to his own devotion. As we have just said, baptism does not totally remove the consequences of original sin. Thus the natural dispositions of the subject vary in each individual, and baptismal grace may be confronted with a nature that is only indifferently disposed or even rebellious, a nature stained by a heavy hereditary burden or prepared by the purity and holiness of a Christian family. All these are the mysterious consequences of sin or virtue, the secret of God's wisdom, justice, and mercy.

(c) *In a word, the baptized person is incorporated into Christ*

All these effects can be summed up in a single word that explains everything: the baptized person is *incorporated into Christ*, becomes a member of His living Body. We must lay great stress on the living realism of this notion: the neophyte, having been baptized

in Christ, is buried in Him, enters within Him, as into a garment with which he is united as one: "For all you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Having been incorporated into Christ, the baptized person is *configured* to Him, configured to His twofold mystery of death and Resurrection (Rom. 8:29; Phil. 3:10-11).

Baptism has marked the new Christian with its seal, its "character" (mark, impress, or seal), a mysterious reality implanted in his intellect and that actualizes Christ's likeness within him, thereby making it possible for him to exercise the acts of Christian life and worship (see p. 24 above). This character which makes the Christian "another Christ" is infallibly received, regardless of the baptized person's dispositions. Likewise it is indelible and remains forever, regardless of the person's subsequent weaknesses, sins, and apostasies. It is because of the permanence of this character, independent of the dispositions of the subject and minister alike, that once Baptism has been received it cannot be renewed: "Christ died to sin *once for all*" (Rom. 6:10).

The existence of this character also explains that Baptism received with bad dispositions can be *valid* and can effectively place the seal of Christ upon the neophyte even though the salutary effect of the sacrament may be suspended as long as these bad dispositions continue. Baptismal character subsists in this soul like a hidden seed until the moment when grace meets favorable dispositions and is thus able to complete the likeness of Christ in the soul.

Controversies on the validity of Baptism conferred by heretics and on the non-repetition of the sacrament have led the Church to elaborate this theology of "character," and to clarify distinctions between validity and salutary effect, between character and grace, between configuration to Christ through the character and conformity with Him through grace. Here again, the practice of the Church has governed the development of theology.

Through his incorporation into Christ, the baptized person is incorporated into the *Church*. To stress the significance of this capital fact, it might be good to reverse this formula and to say that the baptized person is made a member of the Church and thereby incorporated into Christ. "The primary fact is social in nature" (H. de Lubac, *Catholicism*). And Baptism makes us members of a body before establishing us in an individual relationship with Christ. "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (I Cor.

12:13). The Church was born on Calvary, from the water that flowed from Jesus' open side; and she is continually reborn in the water of Baptism that each day admits new children into her fold. Like the Eucharist but for a different reason, Baptism is the sacrament of unity.

The baptized person becomes a son of the Church that brings him forth to life in the womb of the baptismal waters (see the Preface for the consecration of fonts and the Collects of Easter Week, *in albis*). Through the Church the baptized person participates in the life of Christ, her Bridegroom; he shares in her worship and first of all in the Eucharistic banquet, to which he henceforth has a right to be invited; he has the right to offer the Christian sacrifice in union with the whole assembly of the faithful, and to commune in the sacrament of Christian unity. His whole life as a baptized Christian is both a Christian and an ecclesiastical life.

B. The Subject

1. WHO IS REQUIRED TO RECEIVE BAPTISM?

Every man without exception must receive this indispensable means of salvation: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5). We can be saved only by communion in the death and Resurrection of Christ. Now it is Baptism that renews this death and Resurrection in us. Without Baptism received in fact or simply in desire, no one can be saved. And since every man *is required* to save his soul, there is an absolute obligation incumbent upon all men to receive Baptism. To refuse to do this with full knowledge and consent is to sink deeper into sin.

2. WHEN MUST BAPTISM BE RECEIVED?

Obviously without delay, so as not to impede the work of salvation. *For infants*, the law of the Church has specified that they must be baptized as soon as possible, *quamprimum*. And she makes it the duty of pastors and preachers to remind the faithful often of their grave obligation on this matter (*Can. 770*). They are not to wait more than a few days, not only to make sure the newborn child does not die without Baptism, but also in order to sow as soon as possible the seeds of the Christian life in his soul, so that it may blossom within him before any bad habits take root, and so

that having been nurtured from earliest childhood in the practice of the Christian life, he will afterward persevere in it more steadfastly.

For adults, it is required to wait until they have finished receiving instructions and given proof of their good dispositions. Moreover, if it is convenient, the solemn administration of Baptism is to be postponed until the vigil of Easter or the vigil of Pentecost (Can. 772).

3. WHAT DISPOSITIONS MUST BE DEMANDED OF THE SUBJECT?

Certain dispositions are necessary *for adults*. While the sacrament acts by itself (*ex opere operato*) and does not receive its efficacy from the dispositions of the subject (*opus operantis*), that does not mean it is a magical or mechanical rite. Inasmuch as it is the meeting between God's action and man's faith it demands that man should dispose himself to receive this action.

(a) *The intention of being baptized*

"He who created you without your cooperation, will not justify you without it" (St. Augustine, *Serm.* 169). To die to sin in order to live a new life in Christ presupposes a free and personal resolution to die to one's sins through penance and to live in newness of life by the reception of Baptism. Baptism administered to an adult against his will or without his being aware of it would be invalid. And it is permissible to confer Baptism upon a dying person deprived of consciousness only if he has previously in some way expressed his desire to receive it.

(b) *Repentance*

We use this word in preference to the word *penance*, to make clear that the question is one of an interior movement of conversion, *metanoia*, far more than of exterior acts of penance, with all that this word now evokes for us in the way of "mortification."

"Repent and be baptized every one of you" was St. Peter's exhortation (Acts 2:38); cf. 3:19). Through Baptism man is incorporated into Christ, clothed with Him (Gal. 3:27), united to Him in order to live by His life. Now all this is impossible for anyone who voluntarily remains in his sins. It is impossible to start a new life without abandoning the old one, to receive the rite of purification without having the inward desire to be purified from

one's sins. Otherwise, the sacrament would be an empty and false gesture. "Baptism is not to be conferred save on those in whom there appears some sign of their interior conversion: just as bodily medicine is not given to a sick man, unless he shows some sign of life" (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 68, a. 4, ad 2).

This inward repentance finds outward expression by the general renunciation of sin made by the catechumen: "I renounce Satan, and his words and pomps . . ." It is also expressed by the humiliation involved in submitting to the rites of exorcism, the prostrations, etc., which we have already described. No confession is required,⁴ nor any work of penance or satisfaction demanded. The Passion and death of Christ, to which the new Christian is incorporated, wipe away all sins.

(c) *Faith*

"He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mk. 16:16). Faith comes first, for without faith it is impossible to be pleasing to God and to be saved. Jesus affirmed this emphatically, and established a close bond between Baptism and faith. The convert who comes for instruction asks the Church of God for the faith he will need to receive Baptism and thereby to attain eternal life. Before he is admitted into the baptistery he will be asked to solemnly repeat the Creed of faith that has been transmitted to him. And at the very last moment before the baptismal ablution, he will be required to answer "I believe" to the threefold interrogation relating to faith in the Trinity, in Christ, and in the mysteries of salvation. As we have seen earlier, in the Rome of the third century and Milan of the fourth century (and in some localities even today), it was during the very act of this profession that the catechumen was washed in the waters of salvation.

Indeed, no one can receive salvation, or justification, or grace, without faith: "The justice of God (is) through faith in Jesus Christ" (Rom. 3:22; 5:1; Phil. 3:9; Acts 13:39). To approach God, we must believe (Heb. 11:6), and believe with a lively faith, the faith that works through charity (Gal. 5:6). It is faith that in-

⁴ If the catechumen desires it out of devotion, he can confess his sins. But this will be solely to arouse him to repentance and humility, and to give him the principles of the Christian life by which he will henceforth be obliged to live.

corporates us into Christ (Eph. 3:17). There is need here of at least an *act* of faith inspired by a movement of actual grace. The sacrament, God's answer to man's faith, completes the work of justification by infusing the theological *virtue* of faith together with sanctifying grace.

Baptism received without true faith would not save, nor would it give the grace of justification. It would however be valid, it would impress the Christian character upon the soul, and it would not need to be repeated. From this point of view, faith is not necessary either in the subject or in the minister; it suffices for the other essential conditions to be fulfilled. For the sacraments are not the work of the justice of the man who administers or receives them, but of the power of God (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 68, a. 8).

Such are the dispositions that the adult must arouse within himself for the salutary and useful reception of Baptism. And yet it is really God Himself who produces these dispositions in him; for they are the work of grace that predisposes and attracts him. "The physician of souls, i.e. Christ, works in two ways. First, inwardly, by Himself: and thus He prepares man's will so that it wills good and hates evil" (IIIa, q. 68, a. 4, ad 2).

(d) *What of infants?*

They, too, must be baptized. Without mentioning the texts from the *Acts* that relate the Baptism of entire families in which there may have been infants (11:14; 17:31-32), the usage of the Church on this point has been attested to at least since St. Hippolytus. And this practice has been so universal that St. Augustine used it as an argument to prove the existence of original sin in his debates with Pelagius. Even infants need to be purified, though they have not committed any personal sins. Just as they contracted the stain of original sin as sons of Adam, so by being reborn in Christ they receive the grace that permits them to enter eternal life.

Inasmuch as infants are incapable of producing by themselves the dispositions of which we have spoken, they bring to Baptism—if not the dispositions of their parents, who may themselves be unbelievers—the dispositions of those who present them to be baptized, or better still the dispositions of the entire society of saints and believers whose charity has introduced them into the communion of the Spirit. In a word, to use St. Augustine's way of speaking, it is Mother Church who receives these little ones into her bosom

and who lends them her own sentiments. They are saved not by their personal acts but by the acts of the Church that communicates her faith to them.

Except in case of danger of imminent death, infants are not to be baptized *against the will of their parents*. Natural law, which entrusts a child to his parents' care, must not be violated—even to bring salvation to this child. "Wherefore it would be contrary to natural justice if such children were baptized against their parents' will; just as it would be if one having the use of reason were baptized against his will" (IIIa, q. 68, a. 10). To this may be added a motive of prudence: to baptize the child of unbelieving parents against their will would be exposing him to return to unbelief under the pressure of his familial environment (see Canon 750, No. 1 and 2).

But when a child begins to make his own decisions in all that relates to divine and natural law, he can then, of his own volition and against his parents' disapproval, ask to be baptized as well as to contract marriage. And in such an instance, it is permissible to exhort and induce him to receive Baptism. And it should be noted that this "age of reason" does not wait to make its appearance until legal maturity.⁵

C. The Minister

Normally, the minister of Baptism is the priest. But why not reserve the administration of this sacrament to the bishop, the successor of the Apostles to whom the command was given: "teach and baptize"? And what of the deacon? And how can we justify baptism conferred by a layman?

In the early days of the Church it was the bishop, the head of the Christian community, who administered Baptism. That is what the Apostles did (Acts 2:41). "Only the bishop is permitted to baptize and to celebrate the agape" (St. Ignatius, *to the Smyrnians*,

⁵ It is pertinent to ask here whether it is possible to baptize a child in his mother's womb. St. Thomas answers in the negative; but he is referring to a Baptism received by the mother and which would justify the child hidden within her. Modern techniques of which he knew nothing make it possible to baptize a child "in utero" directly. The physician or midwife should proceed in this way if there is reason to fear the child might die in the course of a difficult delivery. If the child survives and there is doubt as to the validity of the Baptism thus conferred, he may be rebaptized conditionally. Likewise, any foetus ejected before the term and whose death is not certain should be conditionally baptized.

8:2). Even today the solemn Baptism of adults is ordinarily reserved to the bishop (Can. 744).

But the Apostles did not want to be overwhelmed by their pastoral duties to the detriment of their missionary task. And so they looked around for help. That is what St. Peter did in Cesarea: "And he ordered them to be baptized" (Acts 10:48). In Corinth St. Paul baptized a few persons at most (I Cor. 1:17). Paul himself had been baptized in Damascus by Ananias (Acts 9:18). And St. Ignatius of Antioch's words let it be understood that with the bishop's authorization, others could administer Baptism. When parishes, and especially country churches, multiplied, Baptism by priests became the normal procedure.

As a sharing of the episcopal power, the priesthood confers upon the priest the power to baptize: "*Sacerdotem oportet offerre, baptizare . . .*" But as a usual thing, the right to baptize belongs to the pastor for his particular territory. The administration of Baptism is an *act of the hierarchy*. Indeed, Baptism incorporates us into the Church, and through her introduces us into the marvelous sacramental organism that leads us to the Holy Eucharist. It gives us the *right* to approach the sacred banquet. It belongs to the priest, ordained chiefly in view of consecrating the Eucharist, to confer Baptism, whose end is to lead the faithful to the Eucharist. The Eucharistic Body is the sign of the Mystical Body; it is the sacrament of the Church's unity. The baptized Christian is the son of the Church, born of her maternal womb. Thus it is fitting that he should be received by the priest in his church.

Deacons received no mandate to baptize. Their function was to "serve at tables" (Acts 6:3), to provide material service to the community, but also to distribute the Holy Eucharist. By reason of his power over the Eucharistic Body, he has power over the Mystical Body. Thus Philip the deacon baptized (Acts 8:12,38). The deacons assisted the bishop during the conferment of solemn Baptism. Even in our own day a deacon can administer Baptism with the pastor's authorization (Can. 741).

But what of a simple cleric? A layman? In case of necessity either can administer Baptism. The basic reason for this is that in the sacrament the minister does not act by his own power; he is only the instrument of Christ's power. The one who baptizes brings only his exterior ministry, but it is Christ who baptizes inwardly. And

Christ can use any instrument He chooses to accomplish any work whatsoever. He alone acts, and man is only His instrument. Obviously Christ normally chooses specific, "specialized," consecrated instruments. But in case of necessity, His mercy has provided that anyone at all, even a layman, can administer this sacrament, which is a necessary means of salvation. And so no man need lose his soul through the impossibility of receiving Baptism from a priest.

Thus in case of extreme necessity, anyone at all can baptize: a layman, a woman, even someone who is not baptized himself—providing he perform the rite correctly and conform to the Church's intention. In the third century, a serious controversy brought St. Cyprian into conflict with Pope St. Stephen. The former refused to admit that the Baptism conferred by heretics could be valid. It was St. Augustine who definitively settled this doctrinal point: the baptizer, regardless of his faith, his holiness, his human and superhuman qualities, is only an instrument through whom the power of Christ passes, and it is this power alone that acts. The faithful must not be thwarted, should they address themselves to a less virtuous or even an unworthy minister. Commenting upon St. John, St. Augustine says: "It is He—Christ—who baptizes. Does Peter baptize? It is He who baptizes. Does Paul baptize? It is He who baptizes. Does Judas baptize? It is He who baptizes" (*In Ioan . . .*, Tract VI, 7-8; cf. Jn. 3:26).

The *godfather* has a double role:

Before Baptism, he must answer before the Church regarding the candidate's good intentions: an indispensable guarantee in a pagan society. If the candidate is an infant, he will make the responses for him. It is therefore necessary that the godfather be a Christian, and a practicing Christian. Heretics, unbelievers, excommunicated persons, and public sinners (e.g. a remarried divorced person) are excluded from the role of godparents.

At the moment of Baptism, the godparent must receive the neophyte as he comes from the baptismal font, or at least touch him physically during the sacramental act. Then, he must complete his instruction, teach him Christian morals, how to live as a Christian, "*conversatio christianae vitae*," a work of education that is necessary after the spiritual generation brought about by Baptism. The godparent's action must be discreetly added to that of Christian parents, and when need arises substitute for it.

D. Substitutes for Baptism

The sacraments, those instruments chosen by Christ to be intermediaries of His grace and of our sanctification, are means. They are choice and privileged means, but none the less means which we can do without if absolutely necessary and which can be replaced by something else. "God is not bound by His sacraments." He can produce grace in the soul directly, without any sign or by means of other signs. If it is impossible to receive Baptism, are there *substitutes for it*?

Christian tradition recognizes two such substitutes: martyrdom, and the desire for baptism accompanied by ardent charity—in short, Baptism of blood and Baptism of desire.⁶ Theology owes it to itself to justify this tradition.

The sanctifying effect of Baptism is produced by the Passion of Christ, as instrumental cause, and by the Blessed Trinity, as principal cause—and most particularly by the Holy Spirit, to whom the effects of grace are attributed by appropriation. Thus we are confronted with causes of three orders: water, the Passion, and the Holy Spirit. Even though a person is not *sacramentally* configured to the Passion by Baptism of water, he can be *really* configured to it by martyrdom, and thereby receive the grace of the Passion. And even without this material configuration, we can receive this grace directly from the Holy Spirit by faith, love, and penance. Such, then, is the role of those "substitutes" for Baptism which make the soul go beyond signs and make direct contact with the holy reality which they symbolize. (The same can be said of "spiritual communion," penance, etc.).

In the case of Baptism of desire, this is not simply a wish to receive Baptism—for then every catechumen would be justified before receiving the sacrament. Baptism of desire is a movement of burning charity, under the inspiration of the Spirit, which kindles faith, love, and repentance in the soul and impels it to conversion.

Now, Baptism of blood is superior to this "Baptism of the mind." In martyrdom, the principal causes of the salutary effect of Baptism—the Passion of Christ and the Holy Spirit—act more directly.

⁶ Literally, Baptism "of breath," *baptismus flaminis*, the breath of the Holy Spirit, or the burning wind of charity. The expressions "Baptism of the spirit" or "Baptism of fire" could well be used to show that there is question here not of a mere wish but of a firm resolve to receive Baptism.

Suffering and death accepted out of love make the martyr profoundly like Christ in His Passion. And martyrdom involves a more intense action of the Spirit of love which acts with a more fervent delight and love: "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13).

These are authentic Baptisms because they produce the salutary effects of Baptism. And yet Baptism of blood and of desire are not *sacraments* since they are not *signs*. They do not impress upon the soul the character that admits the neophyte into the visible Body of Christ and permits him to take part in Christian worship. They do not dispense with the obligation to receive Baptism of water, should it ever be possible.

Appendix

CIRCUMCISION

The Fathers and theologians consider circumcision as a figure and an announcement of Baptism. By means of this rite the children of Abraham, the father of all believers, were admitted into God's people, just as the Christian is introduced through Baptism into the new people, the Israel of the spirit, the Church. Like Baptism, the sacrament of faith, circumcision was a sensible rite which was a profession of faith in the Messiah promised to Abraham. St. Augustine, especially, has brought out the unity between the faith of the "ancients" and our own. Theirs was a faith in the Christ who was to come, die, and rise again. Ours is faith in Christ who has already come, died, and risen again. Both they and we believe in Christ who is to come again in glory (See *De nupt. et concup.*, Book II, 24 P.L. Vol. 44, col. 450; also many other passages).

St. Thomas goes so far as to say that circumcision was a *sacrament* (IIIa, q. 70, a. 1, ad 2). Of course the word "sacrament" must be understood here in the very broad sense of a sensible sign, the figure of grace. Circumcision gave grace, with all its effects—and therefore remitted original sin—but it did so differently from Baptism. Baptism confers grace by its own power as an instrument of Christ's Passion. Circumcision conferred grace, not by the virtue inherent in the rite, but by faith in the Passion to come, a faith which was professed by submitting to the rite, a personal faith in the case of adults and the faith of the parents in the case of infants.⁷

⁷ The daughters of the Jews were justified by faith alone.

St. Paul says explicitly that Abraham "received the sign of circumcision as the *seal* (*sphragis*, the same word used to designate Baptism) of the justice of faith" (Rom. 4:11).

The difference is very clear between justification produced *ex opere operantis*, by faith, of which circumcision is the sign, and justification caused *ex opere operato*, by Baptism, the sign of faith. Above all, we should note here the admirable unity of the economy of our salvation, so strongly emphasized by St. Augustine. There is no salvation except through faith in Christ: circumcision, like Baptism, is a "sacrament of faith."

Second Part

CONFIRMATION—A SACRAMENT THAT COMPLEMENTS BAPTISM

Besides Baptism, there exists another rite of Christian initiation, complementary to the first. And this poses for the theologian as well as for the historian problems about which we must say a few words. It would appear that this will prove the best way of introducing our readers to the study of the sacrament of Confirmation.

A. Scripture clearly indicates the existence of a twofold rite

John had announced that the Messiah would baptize “with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Lk. 3:16; cf. Jn. 1:33). And Jesus for His part had declared that unless men were reborn “of water and the Spirit” (Jn. 3:5) they could not enter the kingdom of God. There is no reason to doubt that the Holy Spirit intervenes at the Baptism of the Christian, just as He appeared at the Baptism of Christ Himself in the Jordan (Mk. 1:10). The Christian is baptized in the name of the Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Compared with John’s Baptism of water, the Christian’s Baptism is a Baptism of the Spirit and of fire. Only the Spirit of God can, like fire, penetrate into the depths of the soul to bring it forth to a new, divine birth (cf. Jn. 1:13).

And yet Jesus had announced to His Apostles that He would send them the Holy Spirit: this promise was insistently repeated in

¹ To prevent any misunderstanding, let us explain that we are using the word “initiation” not in the sense of rudimentary teaching that will some day be more advanced (as for instance *Initiation to the Bible, Initiation to Theology*), but in the way the Fathers of the Church use it, to mean the totality of the sacramental rites that make the Christian a perfect man, an “initiate” into all the “mysterics.” In this sense, “initiation” is not opposed to “perfection.” Initiation leads to perfection, and it is when the initiation is completed that we are perfect.

Thus, the Christian’s initiation is completed only when, by a new and more abundant effusion of the Spirit, Confirmation has made him an adult in the spiritual life, and—let us add—when he has been admitted to participation in the Body of the Lord by Eucharistic Communion. Thus Christian initiation forms a whole and includes the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. Confirmation is the second stage of this initiation.

the discourse after the Last Supper (Jn. 14:16,17,26; 15:26; 16:7, 8-13). Let us also call to mind the *Acts*: "And while eating with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, 'of which you have heard,' said he, 'by my mouth; for John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit . . . you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be witnesses for me' " (Acts 1:4-8).

We know how the Holy Spirit came upon them "as of fire" (Acts 2:1-4). The Apostles' initiation was thenceforth complete. Inwardly transformed, having attained to the fullness of Christian manhood, they were clothed with *fortitude*, and with great *power* they gave testimony to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Acts 4:31-33).

Every Christian must also receive this twofold initiation in water and in the Spirit. We have proofs of it dating back to the very first years of the Church. During the persecution that followed Stephen's death (about A.D. 36), the Christians "were scattered abroad throughout the land of Judea and Samaria" (Acts 8:1). Philip the Deacon came into a town of Samaria and "preached the Christ" (Acts 8:5). "Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John. On their arrival they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for as yet he had not come upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:14-16). It appears, therefore, that baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus," administered by a deacon, did not suffice for Christian initiation. The baptized person also had to "receive the Holy Spirit." And that was done through a special rite, the imposition of hands which was reserved to the Apostles.

Twenty years later (about 53-56) Paul arrived in Ephesus, and found about a dozen "disciples" there (Acts 19:1-7). He asked them: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" Beyond any doubt, he was referring to the profession of faith demanded by Baptism. In this context, "to believe" means to be baptized (cf. Acts 8:13). Now, these "disciples" had never heard of the Holy Spirit, and Paul realized that they had only received the Baptism of John. Hence they were now baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus," and Paul imposed hands on them

himself. The Spirit came upon them and "they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy" (Acts 19:7).

In the matter that concerns us here, this episode has real significance: in addition to Christian Baptism ("in the name of the Lord Jesus"), Paul also knew of another rite of initiation, the imposition of hands which gave the Holy Spirit, a rite reserved to the Apostles alone.

We might also cite Hebrews 6:4, in which it is permissible to see references to the three sacraments of Christian initiation: "Those who were once *enlightened* (Baptism), who have both *tasted the heavenly gift* (the Eucharist) and become *partakers of the Holy Spirit* (Confirmation)." Baptism and the gift of the Spirit are perhaps not so clearly distinguished in I Cor. 12:13.

B. Primitive Christianity

There was a long hiatus between the Apostolic period and the beginning of the third century when "confirmation" was once more clearly attested to. There is an explanation for this silence of a century and a half: as Confirmation was administered immediately after Baptism, it was closely bound up with it. Christian usage did not dissociate them, and it was only by slow degrees that theological reflection distinguished them.

St. Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* refers to an anointing of neophytes with consecrated oil by the priest, immediately after Baptism, as they left the baptismal pool. The priest would say these words: "I anoint you with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ" (No. 21). Then the bishop would impose hands on them, calling down grace upon them and finally signing them on the forehead with the sign of the Cross (*consignation*). Later on, this imposition of hands was performed in a special chapel.

In the third century, Tertullian and St. Cyprian attested clearly to the existence of this imposition of hands by the bishop by which the soul was enlightened by the Holy Spirit, as a ceremony distinct from Baptism. They declared it was by this twofold sacrament that the Christian was made a child of God. In the year 251, Pope Cornelius wrote to Fabius of Antioch concerning Novatian's schism, and pointed out that the latter, being ill, had received only the Baptism of infusion; and that once restored to health he had not received what the Canon of the Church required him to receive: "he was not *sealed* by the bishop; and since he had not received this

rite, how could he have received the Holy Spirit?" (Quoted in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, VI, 43,15).

C. The Rite

The *rite* of this second sacrament in the primitive Church was the imposition of hands (Acts). This rite was still preserved in Africa in the time of St. Augustine,² in Gaul (Council of Arles, 314), and in Spain (Council of Elvira, 306). But in the East, and in Rome at least since the time of St. Hippolytus, the *consignation* was known, i.e. the anointing with chrism accompanied by the sign of the Cross, distinct from the post-baptismal anointing. By the fifth century, the *consignation* became the essential rite of Confirmation, as witnessed by a letter from Pope Innocent I to Decentius, Bishop of Gubbio (416).

Thus the rite was changed about. At first the anointing and the signation were added to the imposition of hands. Then these two acts became the essential rite, supplanting the imposition of hands, which was reduced to the rank of an accessory rite (see *Can.* 780). Here is an interesting case of a profound modification brought about in the rite of a sacrament. The Church in this instance made use of the liberty Christ had granted her to adapt a sign that expresses the gift of the Spirit promised by Christ.³ The Church's usage, *consuetudo Ecclesiae*, whose great authority in sacramental matters St. Thomas recognizes, put an end to the indeterminateness in which Christ had chosen to leave the matter of this sacrament. The anointing of oil, like the imposition of hands, is well fitted to signify the penetrating yet gentle imprint of the Holy Spirit upon the soul. Not only is oil the element that feeds fire, but it also calls to mind the fire that descended upon the Apostles at Pentecost (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 72, a. 2, ad 1).

D. The specific effect of the sacrament of Confirmation

"They laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:17; cf. 19:6). Confirmation completes the work of

² St. Augustine also alludes to the anointing. *In Epist. ad Parthos*, Tr. III, 5 (P.L., Vol. 35, col. 2000): "Unctio spiritualis ipse Spiritus sanctus est, cujus sacramentum est in unctione visibili."

³ There is no need to wonder *when* Christ instituted Confirmation. For, as St. Thomas remarks, He instituted this sacrament "not by bestowing, but by promising it" (IIIa, q. 72, a. 1). It is in Christ's promise of the Spirit that we must seek the institution of the sacrament of Confirmation.

Christian initiation by clothing the faith professed in Baptism with the Holy Spirit (cf. Tertullian, *De praescr.* 36:4). The Fathers, who rarely separated Baptism from Confirmation in practice, laid little stress on the proper effect of the latter. It should be noted, however, that they spoke freely of a *gift* of the Holy Spirit, and of a spiritual *sign* or *seal* that completes, seals, the work of Baptism.

The soul is enlightened by the Spirit (Tertullian, *De resurr. carn.* 8), sanctified by the holy and invisible Spirit (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Mystag.* III,3). By prayer and the imposition of hands the neophyte receives the Holy Spirit, and the seal of the Lord completes and perfects his initiation (Cyprian, *Ep.* 73:9). St. Ambrose also speaks of the seal of the Spirit, *signaculum spirituale* (*De myst.* 7:42; *De sacr.* III 2:8; VI 2:6,8).

But has not Baptism already made the soul the temple of the Holy Spirit? Does not the entire Trinity, in whose name the Christian was baptized, dwell in his soul afterward? What more can Confirmation bring?

Here the Fathers speak of a new effusion, of a greater fullness, similar to the one that was poured out upon the Apostles on Pentecost, similar to the effusion of the seven gifts that filled the Messiah's soul (see Is. 11:2-3, which St. Hilary applied to the gift of the Holy Spirit to the soul, *In Matt.* 15:10; P.L. Vol. IX, col. 1007). On Pentecost the Apostles received the fullness of the Spirit, who completed in them the work begun by Christ and made them *witnesses* to His Resurrection: "And with great power the Apostles gave testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord" (Acts 4:33; cf. 1:8; 2:32). And testimony can go to the limit of *martyrdom*. Likewise, the baptized Christian receives through Confirmation the power of the Holy Spirit (*Spiritus Sanctus ad robur*), that makes him capable of boldly confessing the name of Christ (Council of Florence, 1439, *Decree for the Armenians*, which takes up the expressions used by St. Thomas). *Power and boldness* in bearing witness: this is what truly characterizes the Apostle (Acts 4:13, 21,31; 28:31).

Thus Confirmation is the sacrament of Christian virility. Baptism is the efficacious sign of birth in the spiritual life, the event that makes man a *child* in the life of grace. Confirmation completes the spiritual growth which makes of this newborn child an *adult*, a perfect man who has reached "the mature measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). It is a new effect, the gift of a special grace,

that makes Confirmation a special sacrament formally related to Baptism.

To this new activity of the adult Christian corresponds a new *character*, a spiritual power that fits him to accomplish the acts of a full-fledged man. Baptismal character gives the Christian the right and the power to participate in Christian worship, especially by the reception of the sacraments. The adult is not content to receive passively and to live for himself. He affirms himself outwardly, speaks, acts, and when necessary fights, in defense of what is rightly his.

The confirmed Christian must not live solely for his own personal salvation. Confirmation arms him for spiritual combat against the enemies of the faith. He is fitted to proclaim publicly by his words and acts the faith in Christ that he professed in Baptism. And he makes this public profession quasi-officially (*quasi ex officio*, cf. IIIa, q. 72, a. 5, ad 2), in virtue of the responsibility this character places upon him. And if sacramental character is ordered to Christian worship, we can say that the character of Confirmation arms the recipient for the defense of the sacred realities that are the object of this worship.

That is why it has been said that Confirmation is the sacrament of Catholic Action, for it is from this sacrament that the baptized Christian receives his "mandate" as a militant.

From the above considerations, we can deduce the *necessity of Confirmation*. No doubt it is not a strictly necessary means of salvation, as is Baptism. Rather does it bring plenitude and fulfillment to the Christian, through precious graces without which his normal spiritual development would remain incomplete. To refuse to receive the sacrament of Confirmation is not only to scorn the gift of the Holy Spirit, but also to condemn oneself to remain in a sort of spiritual infantilism. It is culpable negligence which deprives one of necessary helps in the inevitable warfare against the world and Satan. It leaves one open to the danger of being unarmed in a terrible conflict.

Failure to receive Confirmation also deprives a person of the perfection of eternal glory to which he is called. And we should note how much this eschatological perspective can broaden our theology by reminding ourselves of the Christian's glorious vocation. Thus St. Thomas does not hesitate to declare that when there is danger of death Confirmation should be administered even to in-

fants, so that they may not be deprived of this supreme perfection in glory.

The ancient custom, as we have seen, was to administer Confirmation immediately after Baptism. The Eastern Churches have preserved this practice, even in the case of infants. The custom of the Latin Church is to defer Confirmation until the age of reason has been reached (Can. 788), but under normal circumstances "Confirmation should be received before the Eucharist" (*Directives pour la pastorale des sacrements*, No. 33).

The ordinary minister of confirmation is the bishop, the successor to the Apostles. By right, authority to administer Christian initiation and admission into the community is reserved to him alone. That is all the more reason why it is incumbent upon the bishop to complete and perfect this initiation.

However, the Pope can grant to a simple priest the faculty of administering this sacrament, using the chrism consecrated by the bishop. All the priests of the Eastern Rite enjoy this privilege. By a recent decision all priests,⁴ even those of the Latin Rite, have the right to confer Confirmation when there is danger of death. Priests must not neglect to use this faculty in favor of infants who would otherwise die before receiving the sacrament.

The Confirmation rite now in use is the anointing with holy chrism on the forehead, as if to publicly mark our Christian character, and so that neither fear nor false modesty may prevent us from publicly confessing Christ (IIIa, q. 72, a. 3). This anointing is accompanied by a triple sign of the Cross and by the formula: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

According to authentic interpretations, we must seek the primitive rite of Confirmation, the *imposition of hands*, not in the collective imposition of hands that opens the ceremony but in the bishop's imposing his hand on the confirmand's head at the same time as he marks his forehead with holy chrism.⁵

⁴ More precisely, this privilege is granted to the *pastor* for his parish. See in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 9, 1947, pp. 96-99, a commentary by Dom L. Beaudouin on the Decree, *Spiritus sancti munera*.

⁵ The "gentle blow" which the bishop gives the confirmed person is a gesture of fatherly affection, a caress, which has superseded the kiss that the pontiff in the primitive Church gave the person he had just baptized and "consigned" (cf. Hippolytus, *Trad. Apost.*, 22).

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Chapter III

THE EUCHARIST

I. The Revelation of the Mystery

1. THE TEXTS

Christian liturgy and preaching have recognized and exploited the announcements of the Eucharistic mystery to be found in the Old Testament: the sacrifice of Melchisedech (Gen. 14:18-20), the oracle of Malachias foretelling the end of the Temple's victims and the advent of a pure oblation, offered to God throughout the world (Mal. 1:10-11), and many other passages as well. But these are only remote announcements or figures.

Only in the New Testament do we find an explicit revelation. The most ancient document is the First Epistle to the Corinthians, written about the year 56-57. In accordance with St. Paul's custom, his doctrinal teaching grows out of answers to concrete questions. In forbidding participation in pagan sacrificial banquets, Paul argues for the Christian banquet (I Cor. 10:16-22). To curb abuses in the celebration of the Eucharist, he chose the circumstances of its institution as principles for a solution (I Cor. 11:26-32). Nowhere else in his writings does St. Paul touch upon this subject.

In the Synoptic Gospels we find merely the account of the institution of the Last Supper (Mt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:15-20). The breaking of the bread in the episode of the disciples of Emmaus cannot be considered Eucharistic. The tradition in favor of such an interpretation is neither ancient nor unanimous. It would be very surprising if Jesus had celebrated the Eucharist with disciples who had not been present at the Last Supper.

St. John gives us no account of the institution. On the other hand, he reports Jesus' discourse announcing this sacrament.

In the Acts we find no mention of the institution, no doctrinal presentation or description of the rite. There are only a few rather vague allusions to its celebration. This is all the more surprising since the practice of the initiation rites (Baptism and the conferring of the Holy Spirit) holds such a prominent place in these writings.

The literary formula that could cover the Eucharistic rite is: "the breaking of the bread" (Acts 2:42; 43-46; 20:7-10; Luke 24:35). The existence of the rite seems certain at Troas (Acts 20:7): Paul celebrated a community reunion whose object was "the breaking of the bread." The Apostle's discourse on this occasion seems secondary and there is no question of a meal. Even when understood in this light, these texts of the Acts would provide merely the *fact* of the celebration.

As to the other writings of the New Testament, it suffices to cite the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is generally thought to allude to the Eucharist in 13:9-10.

Essentially, there are four accounts of the institution, occasional fragments of doctrine given in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and the discourse of the promise in the Fourth Gospel.

2. THE ACCOUNTS OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST

The accounts of the institution of the Eucharist present a number of divergences, as do other primitive catecheses. True, they agree on general outlines. The institution took place in the evening, "on the night in which he was betrayed" (I Cor. 11:23). The Synoptics represent this last meal as a paschal meal. Paul fails to mention this, as the object he had in mind did not require it. The formulas pronounced over the bread and the wine are substantially identical. Finally, the Synoptics include the eschatological declaration, although in a different place: "Amen I say to you, that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mk. 14:25; cf. also Mt. 26:29).

Analysis shows even closer similarities between the accounts of Mark and Matthew. To the extent that there is any literary dependence (Matthew's text in Greek is later), he develops the formula pronounced over the cup, adding: "unto the forgiveness of sins" (Mt. 26:28). This logion is not to be found anywhere else.

The accounts of Paul and Luke differ from the first two in several ways that form a recognizable pattern. Thus, the redemptive value of Jesus' death is evoked from the moment the formula is pronounced over the bread; the cup is distributed after the meal with special words in which the covenant is called "new." The essential point is the order of repetition placed on Jesus' lips. It is certainly an echo of one and the same catechesis. Actually, there is nothing

to oblige us to admit a literary dependence of Luke upon Paul. He had other sources, and must have used Mark's text. That is how we can explain his difficult style, source of the complexity of his textual tradition.

In any event, we can group our accounts in pairs. They attest to two different forms of catechesis, which seem to be independent of one another. However, the teaching of all of them is basically identical. It gives us the same elements.

There are first of all the material elements: the bread and the wine. The bread used in the paschal meal must have been azyme bread. However the four collations simply contain the generic word "ἄζυτος," perhaps under the influence of primitive worshipping practice. The wine is designated only in the eschatological logion. But we know that during the paschal meal all the cups contained some wine with a little water mixed in. Moreover, the practice of using only water, which was limited to a few groups and to heretical circles, was based less on Scripture than on ascetical prejudices. Bread and wine, therefore, were the two basic elements that our Lord took as symbols of the essential spiritual food given to His disciples.

The importance of this function of taking food is also emphasized by the words: "Take and eat" (Mt. 26:26; "Drink" (Mt. 26:27), "and they all drank" (Mk. 14:23). It is a real meal we are concerned with.

Our Lord tells us that what is thus given as food and drink is His body and His blood. Liberal and Protestant groups have long refused to accept the realist sense of these formulas. But in the past fifty years this literal sense has tended to be increasingly accepted, first with regard to Paul's writings—and little by little in the case of the Synoptics—even at the risk of making the Apostle responsible for transforming a memorial repast into a sacrament of the Real Presence. Many theories have succeeded one another in rapid succession, explaining this evolution. In all this exegetical work, a fact has been brought back into prominence that has always been forbidden in Catholic interpretation: the impossibility of giving these formulas a coherent symbolic meaning.

It would be a very strange thing to attribute to the rabbi Paul contamination by Syncretism and the "mystery" religions. The Apostle's religious mentality is a certain guarantee against such a danger. In his exhortation to the Church of Corinth, he had to

rely on the rite as it was actually celebrated, and on its universally accepted meaning.

It was the rite of the body and blood of Christ, but of Christ crucified. In all the accounts of the institution, the bond between this body and this blood and the sacrifice of the Cross is clearly indicated.

To the formula pronounced over the bread, Luke adds: "which is being given for you" (22:19), and Paul adds: "which shall be given up for you" (I Cor. 11:24).

The formulas pronounced over the chalice are still more explicit: "which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins" (Mt. 26:28); "which is being shed for many" (Mk. 14:23); "which shall be shed for you" (Lk. 22:20).

The nourishment that is distributed is therefore the Victim of Calvary. The Church has always taught that Christ's words identify the food and the drink with His body and blood immolated on the Cross.

This sacrificial character of the Cross and of the Eucharist is emphasized by the bond established between them and the conclusion of the Mosaic Covenant. And this is true of the four accounts; there is a direct allusion to Exodus 24:4-8. In both cases, the shed blood, the purifying blood, is the blood of a sacrifice. The New Covenant is concluded by this ritual sacrifice, just as the Old Covenant was. Thus, the ordering of the Supper, the two elements, and the two formulas constitute a sort of representation—at once "mysterious" and real—of the sacrifice of Calvary.

This representation, terminated by the sacramental eating of the Victim that has been made really present, constitutes the Eucharist in the form of a sacrificial meal. And it is a meal that must be renewed. The command to repeat it is to be found in Luke 22:19, and especially in First Corinthians, where this command is given with reference to each element. It is at once a memorial of Christ's death and an announcement of His return: "For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes" (I Cor. 11:26).

Thus, in these accounts we find all the elements of the Catholic Eucharist: two material elements that could not be simpler or more common mysteriously become, through Christ's words, His immolated body and blood. They are given as food and drink to all

who care to come, reminding them of Christ's redemptive death until the day of His return.

In the Synoptics, the spiritual effects of this meal are not emphasized. We shall find these effects in the writings of St. Paul.

3. THE DOCTRINE OF PAUL

Actually, the Apostle does more than merely describe the institution of the Eucharist. While he does not give a Eucharistic teaching in his own name, his calling to mind of a known doctrine reveals various aspects of his thinking. We find this in I Corinthians, Chapters 10 and 11.

In I Cor. 10:1-6, St. Paul speaks of the Eucharist only by allusions, relating it figuratively to Baptism. In I Cor. 10:14-22, wishing to show that participation in pagan sacrificial banquets is an act of idolatry, he argues from the analogy between these meals and the Eucharistic Supper: "Flee from the worship of idols. . . . The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not the sharing of the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread" (I Cor. 10:14-17).

This text is precious for a realistic interpretation of the Pauline Eucharist, and it sums up its effects: "Communion with Christ and among ourselves through participation in the body and blood of Christ" (Allo. Commentary on I Cor. 2:39). And here again the two representative elements of the Passion are sharply differentiated, as the context concerns only the sacrificial repast. The Eucharist is revealed as our common participation in the sacrifice of the Cross through the eating of the Victim.

This sacrificial character is also very marked in I Cor. 11:26: ". . . you proclaim the death of the Lord. . . ." It is the dignity of the victim that calls for the interior dispositions of which Paul speaks in I Cor. 11:27-34. He who receives Communion unworthily is guilty and subject to judgment. Whence the necessity of a good conscience and of a serious examination of conscience. The Apostle goes so far as to call for illnesses and deaths as temporal punishments for what he considers to be sacrilegious use of the Eucharist.

Thus, for Paul this double rite of the transubstantiated bread and wine is closely bound up with the death of Christ. It is its reminder and its announcement, but with a total realism: the immolated Vic-

tim is really present. It is this Victim that is eaten in the sacrificial repast. It is by this consumption that we enter into communion with the Victim, thus establishing between us the most sacred bond. And that is why Holy Communion must be approached with a pure conscience, under pain of severe judgment.

It was left to John to give us a still more explicit description of the effects of Communion.

4. THE DOCTRINE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

It is a fact that St. John did not record the institution of the Eucharist. Many explanations of this have been proposed. Some of these explanations cannot be countenanced: for example, a fortuitous omission in the original manuscript, or the "discipline of the arcanum." Others are more probable, such as an effort not to duplicate the Synoptics, or the doctrinal completion of the subject in the discourse of the promise. The fourth Gospel is farther removed from the needs of catechesis, and more concerned with doctrinal synthesis.

On the other hand, this is the only Gospel to give us an account of the promise. In the sixth chapter of St. John, after the multiplication of the loaves (6:1-13) (which is found with slight variations in the Synoptics), we read that our Lord withdrew to the mountain (6:15), and rejoined His disciples after walking on the waters. The next day the crowd found Him once more. John then records the Master's long discourse (6:26-65). It is a complex discourse, in which two distinct parts are easily discernible. In the first part, Jesus presents Himself as the bread of life (6:26-49), but seems to ask no more than an assimilation by faith. As for the second part, its directly Eucharistic meaning has finally been admitted, after many fluctuations, by all contemporary Catholic authors.

This discourse does not develop logically after the manner of a thesis, but by successive strokes. Everything is ordered around a single idea: the consumption of the body and blood of Christ which gives eternal life. It is the supreme Johannine theme of life, bound this time to an instrumental action.

In this short passage (6:50-59), the realistic expression "eat my flesh" is repeated four times: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you" (6:54; see also 52,55, and 57), not to mention "eats me" (58),

and the formula: "For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (56).

The formula "eat the flesh" was not used in the first part of the discourse. The emphasis there was upon "coming to Him," "believing in Him." The "bread of life" had not yet been identified with His flesh and blood. But in the second part of the discourse this identification holds first place. The verb used, *τρῶγειν*, signifies literally "to devour." In the Jewish world there is no known metaphoric use of the expression "drink blood." As to the expression "eating flesh," it is sometimes used by the Jews to signify "injuring someone, calumniating him"; but it is evident that this sense does not fit the context. Moreover, the grave obligation implied by the words: "you shall not have life in you" (6:52), cannot be interpreted symbolically. The Jews for their part made no mistake. They understood Jesus' words in their most realistic sense.

Clearly, therefore, Jesus was speaking of real eating. Nevertheless, He did not yet indicate the manner in which this flesh and blood were to be given us, at least not explicitly. The multiplication of the loaves and the formula "bread of life" did suggest it, although we cannot see here the teaching of the sacramental rite of bread and wine.

By this eating, union with Christ is realized: "He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him" (6:57). It is a life-giving union, for it is a participation in the Life that resides in the Father, that quickens Jesus, and that comes to us through Him: "As the living Father has sent me, and as I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he also shall live because of me" (6:58). Hence it is eternal life, and also the assurance of our resurrection on the last day (6:55,59). This eating is a plunging into the river of divine life which transforms souls and bodies and then returns to its Source.

Although John places less stress on the redemptive aspects, he does show the bond between this flesh given as food and the Passion. We can see it in the second part of 6:51: "The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." True, the textual tradition of this verse is very complicated, but the above quoted text is the one most generally accepted, and it must be retained. Here the formulas of the institution and their sacrificial character are joined together.

St. John's doctrine of the Eucharist is above all the doctrine of

the effects it produces in man, and hence of its necessity. The doctrine of the Real Presence clearly emerges from it. A simple allusion is made to the sacrificial character, and the practical realization of the Eucharist under the species of bread and wine is scarcely announced.

5. SYNTHESIS

If we take the New Testament revelation as a whole, it seems right to conclude that the Eucharist appears in it with all the elements that we see in it today. It is a concrete revelation of the mystery. The formulation of Eucharistic doctrine in abstract terms was not to come until later, by a slow process of elaboration.

In the New Testament the Eucharist appears as a means chosen by Jesus to communicate to us the divine life that comes from the Father, dwells in Him, and is granted to us by Christ's redemptive death. It reproduces this death for us, and makes the Victim really present. We all unite ourselves to it in a sacrificial banquet. The Eucharist thereby becomes the symbol and the bond of the Mystical Body of Christ.

The Eucharist is the sacrament of life everlasting, of divine life, given to us by the sacrifice of the Cross. It is the living sacrament of this sacrifice. As such, it was instituted at the Last Supper. It must continue to be reproduced until the end of time as the supreme sermon on the death of the Lord. Thus, the Eucharist prepares the eschatological banquet of the kingdom. It is the prefiguration of the messianic feast in which God will be our food, without need of sign or symbol.

II. From the Sign to the Reality

If the sacraments effect what they signify, it is equally true that they signify what they contain. And in order to penetrate the mystery, we must first look at the human signs that envelop it and thereby reveal rather than hide it. It is not a good method to begin the study of a sacrament by trying *a priori* to determine its essence and then to justify the rites that accompany it in terms of the fitness of a superadded piety and symbolism.

We shall therefore look at the Eucharist as it is celebrated, and starting from its signs we shall proceed to its interior depths. Thus we shall follow an order that conforms to a most enlightening theological structure. From the *sacramentum tantum* (the sign accessible

to all) we shall pass on to the *res et sacramentum* (the reality immediately contained in the sign), and then try to fathom the *res tantum* (the ultimate mystery) as well as we can. Our study will therefore be divided into three major parts: 1) The meal and the Eucharistic celebration; 2) the sacrifice; and 3) the mystery of unity.

1. THE MEAL AND THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

(a) *The Meal*

Anyone who attends the Eucharistic celebration—whether he be a believer or not—immediately realizes it is a meal. Standing at a table covered with cloths and adorned with candles, the celebrant takes bread and a cup of wine, repeating the words and the gestures of Christ at the Last Supper, when He gave the command: “Do this in remembrance of me” (Lk. 22:19; I Cor. 11:24; the anaphora of St. Basil, the anaphora of St. John the Evangelist). Or the words: “As often as you shall do these things, you shall do them in memory of Me” (Roman Canon, cf. I Cor. 1:11:25).

Likewise, the majesty of the table and the sacred vestments of the priest indicate that there is question here of a memorial and sacred meal, imbued with symbolism. Inasmuch as the celebrant repeats Christ’s gestures and says His words in the first person, this is evidently a meal with Christ.

This reminds us of the importance that Christ attached to meals during His mortal life; how He made them one of the most eloquent signs of His identification with the condition of men; how He gave important teachings in connection with meals; how most of His apparitions after His Resurrection were begun or concluded with a meal; and how He pointed to the eschatological value of His earthly meals.¹

In itself, the meal is one of the most richly significant of man’s actions. Not only does it bring the nourishment necessary to life, but it also brings us joy and fulfillment. It does more than bind us to the elementary forces of nature and make us benefit from the life-giving resources of creation placed at our disposal. The definition of the word “meal” is not exhausted by the acts of eating and

¹ On this vast subject, see especially Y. de Montcheuil, *Mélanges théologiques* (Paris, 1946), “L’Eucharistie dans le nouveau Testament,” pp. 23-48; also J. Daniélou, “Les repas de la Bible et leur signification” in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 18 (1949), pp. 7-33.

drinking which are essential to it; for animals eat and are restored, and yet we cannot say they eat "meals" in the strict sense.

The meal is also a family ceremony, a community rite. Every meal is a communion because the table companions, in sharing the same food, unite their minds and hearts. There is no festivity that does not include a meal, or at least whose conclusion is not celebrated by a meal. It is not so ridiculous to speak of the "contagious warmth of banquets." The meal is truly the "matter" of the Eucharist, to the extent that the matter is not merely the material support of the sacramental sign, but actually its model. From the fact that the Eucharist is celebrated in the form of a meal, we realize that it is a mystery of refreshment, joy, fervor, life, and fraternal union.

(b) *The Bread*

In His two most important sacraments—Baptism and the Eucharist—Christ has specified the precise elements of the sacramental sign: in Baptism, it is a bath of water; in the Eucharist, a meal of bread and wine.

Bread is man's fundamental food, giving him strength and courage.² Moreover, since Adam's sin, man has had to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and bread has become the sign of his penance. And yet God favored His chosen people when they were passing through the desert by giving them bread from heaven (Ps. 77:24), bread that contained every delight (Wisd. 16:20-21).

The Eucharistic bread must be wheat bread (C.I.C., c. 815, # 1), for wheat bread is the most common and the most nourishing, the one that most perfectly fulfills the concept of bread. Did not Christ compare Himself to a grain of wheat that bears fruit only on condition that it falls into the ground and dies?³

The symbolism of bread was developed by the Fathers who remarked that bread (as well as wine) is formed from a multitude

² See for example Ps. 103:15: "... and that bread may strengthen man's heart"; Gen. 18:5: (Abraham speaking to his heavenly visitors) "I will set a morsel of bread, and strengthen ye your heart"; and above all the episode of Elias in the desert (III Kgs. 19:4-8), which is a figure of the Eucharist (Office of Corpus Christi).

³ Cf. St. Augustine, *Tract. in Jo.* 51:9, on Jn. 12:24, which we must place in its total context instead of isolating it as is too often done, thus reducing the text to an ascetical precept.

of grains that have been ground and reduced to unity.⁴ Some of the Fathers even found an allegorical significance in the water that holds the dough together, and in the fire that bakes it. Regardless of the illustrious names that defend this catechesis, its value is doubtful and it has no authentic sacramental significance. These are merely pedagogical allegories that ingeniously analyze the natural conditions for the production of bread.

We must reach the same conclusion with regard to the phenomenology of bread for which contemporary catechesis shows considerable liking. Bread would represent the whole life of man (the "breadwinner," "give us this day our daily bread"); it can be obtained only by the cooperative efforts of a multitude, etc. These human interpretations, which para-liturgies and sermons develop with gusto, are not false; on the contrary they are ingenious and probably not foreign to God's own plan. But the Fathers knew nothing of them, and we find no trace of them in the liturgy. The Offertory procession which was customary in Rome for several centuries, the "Grand Entrance" of the Eastern Churches, our present-day Offertory, can only be taken to mean a preparation of the gifts and an anticipated declaration of the only offering that really counts, namely the sacrifice of Christ.⁵

Bread, the matter of the Eucharist, is not a natural sign whose deep significance could be discovered in its entirety by rational analysis. If it were, the Mass could be reduced to a meditation before an ordinary piece of bread. Sacramental signs are institutional signs chosen by Christ, the full significance of which is revealed only to the eyes of faith. This *sacramentum tantum* (the consecrated bread and wine) does not signify the *res tantum* (the unity of the Church) except through the intermediary of signification and efficiency of the *res et sacramentum* (the sacrifice of Christ pro-

⁴ See St. Augustine, *Tract. in Jo.* 26 (Office of Corpus Christi, Lect. 7). Also the famous prayer of *Didache* 9:4: "As this broken bread, once disseminated on the mountains, has been gathered up to become a single whole, so may Your Church be gathered up from the ends of the earth into Your kingdom." It seems that the "one bread" that makes us one according to I Cor. 10:17, does not accomplish this unity because of the unification of the grains in a single entity, but rather because St. Paul sees in this bread, the Body of Christ, the principle of our unity.

⁵ See Paul Bayart, "Au sujet de l'Offertoire," in *La Messe et sa catéchèse*, pp. 304-311. Cf. also our "Note sur le problème de l'offertoire" in *La Messe, approches du mystère*, pp. 41-44.

The first representations of the Eucharist in the catacombs are bound up with the Agape, that is, the fraternal banquet. The catacomb of Priscilla shows us the faithful gathered about a table for the breaking of the bread. Elsewhere, instead of bread there are fish (the fish is the symbol of Christ, who is the matter of this spiritual meal). Or else the fish are added to the bread (an allusion to the multiplication of the loaves, bound up with the Eucharistic promise).

In other representations there are doves drinking, a single cup, a branch of the vine, a wicker basket, etc. In one catacomb there is a dolphin, the figure of Christ the Savior, supporting a basket of loaves of bread (second century).

The fourth-century cup shown here was discovered in the cemetery of Vieil-Atre, at Boulogne-sur-mer, in 1888. It is made of colorless, greenish-tinged glass. It represents Abraham's sacrifice, the symbol-type of the Eucharist. In the center is the altar with its fire. To the right is Isaac, standing naked with his hands bound behind his back. To the left is Abraham holding the knife of sacrifice, and by his side is a ram. In the upper portion we can see God's arm emerging from a cloud. At the bottom is Christ's monogram surrounded by the sun, the moon, and the stars (symbols of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints).

This motif, which has often been reproduced, reminded the first Christians that to celebrate worthily the sacrifice of Christ through the Eucharistic mystery, we must model our hearts in a certain respect upon the heart of our Father Abraham who did not hesitate to offer his only son to God when He demanded it of him.



duced under the species of bread and wine by the form of the Consecration).⁶

It is more useful to investigate the significance of the Biblical figures of the Eucharist, than the meaning of natural bread. For example, the Biblical figure of the manna, which Christ Himself took as a point of comparison in His discourse on the bread of life; the bread of Elias; the sacrifice of Melchisedech.⁷

Wheat bread can be either leavened or unleavened or (azyme bread). In both instances, it is real bread and the consecration of either is valid. However, a priest can lawfully use only one or the other, according to his rite (Council of Florence, Decree for the Greeks, Denz. 692; C.I.C., c. 816).

The paschal meal was supposed to be accompanied with unleavened bread (see Ex. 12:15-20); and so "the feast of Unleavened Bread" and "the day of Unleavened Bread" are synonymous with paschal feasts (Lev. 23:6; Mt. 26:17; I Cor. 5:8). However it is not certain that Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with unleavened bread. The custom during the first ten centuries of the Roman Church of having the faithful bring to the altar loaves of bread baked in their homes would seem to indicate the habitual if not exclusive use of leavened bread. It is possible that the introduction of unleavened bread was responsible for the disappearance of the rite of offerings in kind (and the appearance of the collection of money offerings).

In the course of time, when the use of unleavened bread made it possible to prepare light, round "particles" in advance for the Communion of the faithful, the rite of the breaking of the bread lost some of its importance and was reduced to a testimonial that still subsists in the Roman Mass.

Unleavened bread evokes the Pasch, and St. Paul has brought out its symbolism of purity and sincerity.⁸ In any case, its use presents many practical advantages for the conservation and distribution of the Eucharist.

The Greeks claim that leavened bread is more noble than the unleavened, which moreover seems to them to be an "inert and

⁶ See M. de la Taille, *Mystery of Faith* (Sheed and Ward, 1950), eluc. 42.

⁷ See J. Daniélou, *Bible and Liturgy* (Notre Dame Univ. Press, 1956), ch. 9.

⁸ We could confirm this symbolism *a contrario*, by texts in which the word "leaven" is synonymous with bitterness, wickedness (Mt. 16:6; I Cor. 5:8). But leaven is also the symbol of the progress of the kingdom of God: (cf. Mt. 13:33).

soulless" bread,⁹ ill-suited to signify the food of immortality and the pledge of resurrection.¹⁰

(c) *The Wine*

The Eucharist is not only the sacrament of bread, but also the sacrament of wine. It is forbidden to consecrate the one without the other (C.I.C., c. 817). An objection might be raised against this twofold matter, in the name of a univocal sacramental theology based on Baptism (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 73, a. 2, obj. 3). But the answer is easy: every real meal consists of at least two elements—food and drink. If the Eucharist is to be the sacrament of perfect spiritual nourishment, it, too, must include bread and wine. After the Lord had consecrated and distributed the bread at the Last Supper, He consecrated the cup of wine and passed it around. The sacrifice of Melchisedech had likewise been an offering of bread and wine (Gen. 14:18). The same argument applies to the wine as to the bread: it is the most common and most perfect beverage; wine rejoices the heart of man (Ps. 103:15; Ecclus. 31:35).

The Biblical mystagogy of the wine and the vine is perhaps even richer than that of the bread and the wheat. Whereas the origin of bread seems bound up with the punishment for Adam's sin, the origin of the vine and of wine is bound up with the first covenant between God and humanity, after the first redemption. As Dom Gréa says so well: "Wine was given to man as a consolation and a hope after the great disasters of the flood, and Noah in his mysteri-

⁹ Cf. Corblet, *Histoire de l'Eucharistie*, Vol. I, p. 161.

¹⁰ It will serve no purpose to delay on this greatly confused question which is a relatively unimportant one. (See *D.T.C.*, art. *Azyme*; Corblet, *op. cit.*, I, Bk. 4, chap. 1, art. 3). Starting with Michael Caerularius, anti-Latin polemics juxtaposed two disciplines which for centuries seemed with good reason to be merely questions of local tradition and practical convenience, involving neither dogma nor fidelity to the evangelical institution. Even if, as we believe, Jesus followed the Paschal rite in celebrating the Eucharist, it is very possible that the prohibition of the use of leaven, so explicit in Exodus, was not as rigid in His day. The Paschal meal was eaten in a reclining position in our Lord's day, whereas the first Pasch had been eaten standing up. (The prescription to use unleavened bread, as well as to eat standing up, grew out of the haste necessary in a meal that was the preparation for a rapid flight.) Jesus may therefore have eaten the ritual breads with the paschal lamb, and then consecrated ordinary bread which was used with the remainder of the meal. In any case, the Gospel texts—even that of St. Mark who cites the day of the Last Supper as "the first day of the Unleavened Bread (Mk. 14:12)—speak of "bread" without specifying what kind (cf. Mk. 14:22).

ous drunkenness prefigured the divine follies of the Passion, Christ the object of insults and blasphemy, the sleep of death upon the Cross and the awakening of the Resurrection" (*La sainte liturgie*, Book II, Chapter 3).

The Bible calls wine "the blood of the grape" (Gen. 49:11; Deut. 32:14).¹¹ The vine (*vinea*), so tenderly cared for by God, represents His chosen people (e.g. Jer. 2:21, and especially Is. 5:1-7; Ps. 79:9-19). In several parables the vine represents the kingdom of God (Mt. 20:1-16; 21:28-31, and above all 21:33-41 and parallel passages). In the allegory of the vine (*vitis*) proposed by Jesus after the Last Supper (Jn. 15:1-8), the word suggests even more precisely the mystery of the Church, and the community of life between Christ and His people.

Twice in the Gospels the words "new wine" are given an eschatological meaning: "And no one pours new wine into old wine-skins" (Mk. 2:22, and parallel passages). Then, at the Last Supper, when Jesus passed the cup around the first time (it was not yet the Eucharistic cup), He announced: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until the day when I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father" (Mt. 26:29, and parallel passages).

It is fitting to say a few words here concerning the cup, which is also part of the Eucharistic "matter" and of the Eucharistic "form" (according to the words of institution recorded by Luke and Paul and the words of consecration of the Roman Canon). Three times the Gospels indicate that "the cup" in Jesus' language designates either participation in His Passion (His answer to the sons of Zebedee, Mt. 20:22-23 and Mk. 10:38-39—passages which follow His third announcement of His Passion); or they indicate voluntary acceptance of this Passion (during His agony in the Garden of Gethsemani, Lk. 22:42 and parallel passages; and at the time of His arrest, Jn. 18:11).

The Eucharistic wine must have a little water mixed in with it, according to the Oriental custom that Jesus must have followed. There has no doubt been pious exaggeration about the "little" drop of water that represents our sacrifices united to Christ's sacrifice. But when this idea is stripped of its sentimentalism, it is altogether

¹¹ However in Scripture the wine press does not symbolize the sufferings of the just but eschatologically signifies divine punishments announcing the day of the Lord (Is. 63:1-6; Lam. 1:15); cf.: "the wine press of the fierce wrath of God almighty" (Ap. 19:15).

traditional. The Offertory prayer of the Roman rite (doubtless taken from a Secret of St. Leo for the Nativity) makes of this mixture the symbol of the union in Christ of the human and the divine. And in actual fact the Armenian Monophysites, who accepted only the divine nature of Christ, refused to mix water into the wine.

But the symbolism of union between Christ and the Christian people is clearly affirmed by St. Irenaeus, St. Cyprian, and likewise repeated by St. Thomas: "Therefore when water is mixed with the wine in the chalice, the people is made one with Christ" (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 74, a. 6).

Finally, let us note that red wine, which is still used in the Eastern Churches, was used in the West until the fourteenth century. Its symbolism is evident.

(d) *The Eucharistic Celebration*

The "matter" does not suffice to constitute the *res et sacramentum* of the Eucharist. There is also need of the "form" which clarifies the symbolism suggested by the matter, and in which resides the instrumental efficacy which completes the sacrament. This form consists essentially in the words of the institution: "This is my body. This is the chalice of my blood." But we would be setting aside the inductive method if we isolated this form from the rites that constitute its context. Evidently, St. Thomas seems to admit that even the wicked priest who consecrates all the bread in a bakery and all the wine in a cellar acts validly from the mere fact that he exercises his priestly power.¹² We admit we cannot accept this thesis, which would contradict a great Thomistic principle: For the validity of a sacramental operation, the meeting of the prescribed matter and form and of a validly ordained minister do not suffice. This minister must also have the intention of doing what the Church does (IIIa, q. 64, a. 8, ad 1 and ad 2). Now, how could the minister have this intention if he did not consecrate in the manner willed by the Church? And we know the Church has never agreed that the Eucharistic consecration could be accomplished outside the constellation of rites and prayers that we call the Mass.

¹² *Summa*, IIIa, q. 74, a. 2, ad 2. We say "*seems to admit*" because St. Thomas is not a casuist solving a concrete and anecdotic case, but a theologian answering an objection from the specific point of view taken by the objection. He does not have to decide whether a consecration is valid outside of any celebration, but only if the priest's power to consecrate can be exercised only over a limited quantity of matter.

We shall therefore devote a few pages to a description of the main outlines of the Mass, which are common to all the liturgies, not for the purpose of explaining the significance of the particular rites (this would be a strictly "liturgical" study, foreign to our present purpose), but to bring out the essential marks of the Eucharistic sacrament.¹³

The Mass is ordinarily celebrated in a dedicated church, which facilitates and signifies the assembly of the faithful in a single body.¹⁴ It is celebrated on Sunday preferably, not only because it is the day of the Lord's Resurrection, but also because Christians gather together, as Pliny wrote to Trajan, "on specific days." In the primitive liturgy of the West (as in the East at the present time) there was only one altar in each church where a single Mass was celebrated on Sunday only. Thus the celebration was performed not by a single priest but by the *presbyterium*, the priestly team hierarchized under the leadership of a president who was usually the bishop. Everything about this celebration showed that it was not merely a pious exercise performed by the priest alone in the presence of onlookers, but that it was really a mystery of unity: for example, the style of the prayers (in the second person plural);¹⁵ the frequent greetings addressed to the assemblage (*Dominus vobiscum*), considered as forming the Body of the Lord; the frequent dialogues between the celebrant and the people; and the hymns sung in unison. In present-day Latin discipline, the priest cannot celebrate without the assistance of at least one server or respondent (C.I.C., can. 813) who represents the whole Church by himself alone.

The Eucharistic celebration in the strict sense is preceded by a long function, awkwardly called the Fore-Mass or, for historical reasons, the Mass of the Catechumens. This function, that we pre-

¹³ We are drawing particularly from the study by A.-G. Martimort: "Lignes essentielles de la messe d'après les liturgies comparées" in *La Messe et sa catéchèse*, pp. 86-112.

¹⁴ Cf. our study in *L'Art sacré*, new series, No. 1: "Qu'est-ce qu'une église?" pp. 9-18, and Father Congar's article, *ibid.*, No. 8-9, Sept. 1947: "La maison du peuple de Dieu," pp. 205-220. Cf. also on this theme the liturgical album of *Fêtes et Saisons* entitled "Notre église."

¹⁵ The prayers of the Mass that use the first person singular attest to their relatively recent introduction and to their origin as prayers for private devotion (Offertory prayers, prayers in preparation for Communion) in which the priest speaks as one of the faithful and not as the head of the assembly.

fer to call the evangelical liturgy—because the proclamation of the Gospel is its culminating point¹⁶—is a combination of hymns, prayers, and readings, which proves that the Eucharistic celebration is not a material or magic operation that suffices unto itself, but the celebration of a mystery of faith that requires spiritual preparation. For “the flesh profits nothing” whereas “the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (Jn. 6:64). In truth, the Lord has set two tables for His faithful: the table of His word and the table of His body, the one being a preparation for the other.¹⁷

It is at the close of this function inherited from the synagogue (readings and hymns) that the catechumens were formerly sent away (*missa*), whence our word “Mass” probably received its name.

Neither pagans, nor Jews, nor public penitents, nor even catechumens who were already considered to be “Christians,” were allowed to remain past this point. They were sent away much less because of their unworthiness, which might have been deemed incompatible with the holiness of what was to follow, than because of their incapacity. As they had not yet been incorporated by Baptism into the holy and priestly people, they were incapable of offering up sacrifice with the priests and with the Christian assembly. This sending away is one of the most telling indications of the already sacrificial character of the offertory, which begins the sacrifice, and of the collective priesthood conferred by Baptism.

Once the evangelical liturgy is terminated, the Eucharistic liturgy begins, whose principal phases were clearly indicated by St. Justin (circa 150):

¹⁶ A.-G. Martimort, *art. cit.*, p. 89.

¹⁷ This is a traditional theme among the Fathers and is also exploited in the *Imitation of Christ*, Book IV, chapter 11: “One is the table of the holy altar having the holy bread, that is, the precious Body of Christ; the other is that of the divine law, containing Thy holy doctrine, teaching the right faith, and leading beyond the veil, to the holy of holies.”

Likewise, Bossuet says: “That is why the holy Doctors have so often compared the words of the Gospel to the sacrament of the Eucharist. That is why St. Augustine fearlessly preached that the words of Jesus Christ are no less venerable than His very body. . . . You must now be convinced that the preachers of the Gospel . . . ascend . . . pulpits . . . in the same spirit in which they go to the altar. They ascend the pulpit to celebrate a mystery, and a mystery that resembles the Eucharist. For the truth of Jesus Christ is in evangelical preaching as surely as His body is in the adorable sacrament” (*Sermon sur la parole de Dieu*, 1st point).

Some bread and a cup of diluted wine are brought to the one who presides over the assembly of brethren. He takes them and glorifies the Father of the universe . . . then he makes a long eucharist (thanksgiving) for all the good things we have received from Him. When he has terminated the prayers of the eucharist, all the people present cry out: *Amen*. . . . When the one who presides has accomplished the eucharist . . . the ministers whom we call deacons distribute to all in attendance the bread, the consecrated wine and water, and carry them to those who were absent (*First Apology*, Chapter 65).

The whole purpose of the Offertory is to prepare the bread and the wine and to place them on the altar. It makes no difference whether this act is a procession of the faithful presenting gifts that they will come back to reclaim at the moment of Communion, as was done in Rome for some ten centuries; or whether it is done, as in the East, in a solemn procession of the clergy (called the Grand Entrance). In either case, it is purely and simply a preparation, and it is accomplished wholly with reference to what is to be done later on.

There is no basis in Tradition for any attempt to make of the Offertory a sort of offering of natural possessions or of our own lives—to make it a function almost sufficient to itself. Moreover, to do this contradicts the prayers which accompany this act in the present day liturgy, an act which originally was carried out in silence.¹⁸

The essential portion of the Mass begins with the Preface. It is a solemn thanksgiving whose importance is apparent if we remember that at the Last Supper our Lord “gave thanks” as He had previously done when He multiplied the loaves, and that this giving of thanks was in accordance with the Jewish Pasch. Nor let us forget that our sacrament is called the “Eucharist,” which means thanksgiving. This Preface is not only a solemn prelude,¹⁹ it is the opening of the most intense phase of the Eucharistic celebration. It be-

¹⁸ Cf. Father Bayart's article, cited on p. 103 above, note 5; also *Les divins offices* (Paris, 1948), Vol. I, p. 338, by the same author: “This gesture by the faithful and the priest was already considered by the early Christians as a beginning of the oblation. In reality, it is one with the Eucharistic oblation proper, which is accomplished at the Consecration.”

¹⁹ The word *Preface* is subject to misinterpretation. It possibly is an ancient word coming from the Latin *præfatio*, a word used in pagan worship, and designating the recitation aloud of a religious formula (*præ-fari*: to say before everyone). But perhaps the word should be taken in its usual sense. It would then designate first of all the dialogue of introduction, which is as venerable by its antiquity as by its universality in all the liturgies.

gins the consecration of what is truly a *sacrificium laudis*.²⁰ We see that almost all the consecrations in the liturgy are performed in the manner of a preface: the ordination of deacons, priests, and bishops; the dedication of an altar or of a church; the blessing of psalms, of the paschal candle, etc. But here the ascending, theocentric movement of the *anaphora*²¹ is interrupted several times either by prayers of petition and intercession, or by the account of the institution of the Eucharist.

Indeed, the priest repeats the very words of Jesus over the bread and the wine, by way of narrative and citation. He precedes these words with a remembrance of Christ's Passion: "the day before He was to be betrayed" (Eastern anaphora); "the day before He suffered" (Roman Canon). He follows this with Christ's command to renew this act, and attaches to this a prayer of the greatest importance: the *anamnesis* (renewed remembrance) that is to be found in all the liturgies. In this prayer the priest affirms on the one hand that the act that he has just accomplished is the memorial of the mystery of Redemption (in the Roman liturgy: Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension), and on the other hand that this offering of the victim under the appearances of bread and wine is now accomplished by the Church in the person of her priests and of the faithful who constitute the "holy people." This offering and not the Offertory is the real offering of the Mass. It is concluded by a solemn doxology to which the people proclaim their acceptance by saying *Amen*.

As we have already said, prayers of petition and intercession are intermingled with this offering of Christ's sacrifice to the Father. There are prayers of petition that the Eucharistic oblation may have its full efficacy. These prayers can precede the remembrance of the institution, as do many Secret prayers, the *Quam oblationem* (a prayer that asks the realization of the transubstantiation). They may also follow the remembrance, as do the epiclesis of the Eastern liturgies and the *Supplices* of the Roman Canon. The latter prayer which asks for all future communicants "all heavenly grace and blessing" can also be included among the prayers of intercession. These intercessory prayers implore for the whole Church and her

²⁰ The expression used in Psalms 49 and 115, taken up and used in the Canon of the Mass (Memento of the Living).

²¹ The term *anaphora* designates the act of Consecration in its entirety, and signifies "to carry upward" (cf. *Sursum corda*).

leaders, for benefactors, for the faithful present, for the deceased—in union with the saints in heaven whom the Mass also honors—spiritual and temporal blessings that can be summed up in these two words: peace and unity.

The gifts thus sanctified and offered up are to be distributed to the faithful. In the Roman liturgy since St. Gregory, the “Our Father” serves as the connection between the theocentric doxology with which the first three petitions harmonize and the Communion that gives men their daily bread, manifests their reconciliation, and delivers them from evil.

Communion is preceded by the act of the breaking of bread, which was formerly a practical necessity and which still has meaning as a sign of unity. Preparatory prayers of a more individual sort also precede Communion. But the celebration of Communion, especially in former times, when there was a procession accompanied by a hymn, preserves the meaning of a fraternal banquet. It is followed by prayers of thanksgiving orientated toward a better life and toward the horizons of heaven, and then come brief formulas of dismissal, which have been lengthened in the Roman liturgy in the course of the centuries.

This rapid presentation of the Eucharistic celebration has already shown that this sacrament, even in its exterior appearances, is not an ordinary meal. It is celebrated in a hieratic manner that bespeaks a sacred, mysterious act. It is not a purely material and utilitarian operation. Nor is it a magic action: it is surrounded by prayers and preparations that address themselves to faith; it calls for an active and religious participation by all the celebrants, both priests and faithful; and at every instant it recalls the act of Redemption and especially the Passion of Christ. Finally, in all its phases and aspects, it shines forth as a mystery of community.

We have still to inquire, with the eyes of faith and using the theological analyses of all of Christian Tradition, the depths of realism and efficacy to which this obvious symbolism plunges.

2. THE SACRIFICE

(a) *The Real Presence*

We have seen that the priest, holding in his hands first the bread and then the chalice filled with wine, pronounced the very words of Christ at the Last Supper. That is how the gifts were sanctified. Now

when we consider these words in all simplicity—either Christ's words or the priest's, since they are identical—we see that they clearly affirm that this bread *is* the body of Christ, that this blood *is* the blood of Christ. The whole of Christian antiquity, even if it did not analyze the mode of this reality in detail, admitted from the start this reality which we call the "Real Presence," and today our Catholic faith finds expression on this point in the affirmation of the Council of Trent:

If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really and substantially the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ, but says that He is in it only as in a sign, or figure or force, let him be anathema (Session XIII, Canon 1).

We shall examine a few points in this definition. First, the positive affirmation of the "true, real, and substantial" presence of the body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine. This affirmation specifically combats the Protestant error according to which they would be present "only as in a sign, or figure or force." We take the liberty of insisting on the word "only." The Council of Trent does not condemn Protestants for affirming that Christ is present in the Eucharist "as a sign, as a figure, and by His power." Christ is not visible in the Eucharist. The Council of Trent does not hesitate to tell us that this sacrament, like all the others, is "the symbol" of a sacred reality (Session XIII, Ch. 3, Denz. 876). The Eucharist is a figure, an expectation of the return of Christ and of face-to-face vision. Finally, Christ is present in the Eucharist by His instrumental power which communicates efficacy to the priest's words, as in the other sacraments.

Inasmuch as the Eucharist is a sacrament, Christ is present in it in a sacramental manner. Anyone who denies or forgets this is going head-on into the most serious difficulties, for he is forgetting that the Eucharist is a mystery of faith. Therefore the error does not lie in the affirmation of the Eucharist's significative, figurative, and instrumental nature. It lies in the negation of its reality and substantiality. Indeed, from this point of view the Eucharist differs from the other sacraments not so much by specific difference as by reason of its eminence. Whereas the other sacraments contain only an instrumental, transitory, and participated power,²² the Eucharist contains

²² That is to say, by virtue of a grace that passes through the sacrament at the moment when the sacramental action is performed.

Christ in person, in a lasting manner. We can infer this from the following: 1) the permanence of the consecrated bread and wine; 2) the substantial and absolute character of the verb "to be," which joins the words "My Body" to "this"; 3) the marks of adoration that the Church renders to the consecrated bread and wine, even apart from their actual consecration—both between the Consecration and the Communion of the Mass, and outside of Mass in the adorations, Benedictions, and visits to the Blessed Sacrament which have taken on such vast importance in the devotion of Latin Catholics in the past few centuries.

The text of the Council of Trent says that the bread and the wine contain "the whole" Christ (we have said "in person"), with His soul and His divinity. How can this be said without going beyond the meaning of the formula of Consecration, which speaks only of the body and the blood? Here the theologians distinguish a twofold efficacy in the sacramental words. Obviously, by their own power (*ex vi verborum, in virtute sacramenti*) they produce only what they signify directly: the body, under the appearances of bread; the blood, under the appearances of wine. But we must also take the principle of *concomitance* into account. The priest consecrates the body and the blood, as they actually are, here and now, by using the verb "to be" in the present tense. We shall see that the Consecration consists in establishing a very particular relationship between the elements present on the altar and Christ in heaven.

Christ at the present time is risen, living, and glorious in heaven. Death did separate His body and His blood from His soul, each of these three realities remaining united to His Godhead. His Resurrection reunited them. The Consecration brings down upon the altar, under the appearances of bread, a living body that can no longer be separated from His blood, His soul, and His divinity. When this body is rendered present under the species of bread, there are also rendered present in union with it (the principle of *concomitance*) the blood, and the soul, and the divinity of Christ, who is thus present in His entirety under each of the consecrated species.

"By virtue of this sacrament," that is by virtue of the signifying words, the species of the Eucharist contain respectively only the body or the blood of the immolated Christ. By virtue of *concomitance*, each species contains the whole Christ, living and resurrected, while recapitulating and preserving in this definitive state all the perfection and the virtue of His earlier successive states. The prin-

ciple of concomitance explains not only why the Western Church was able to renounce Communion under both species without injury to the faithful, but also why the Eucharistic sacrifice can really celebrate Christ in all His mysteries, from Advent to Pentecost.

We have just spoken as if logical and a priori explanations were anterior to the facts of worship. We think it would be better to say this: The fact that the Latin Church has not hesitated to deprive the faithful of Communion under the species of wine shows that for the Church's instinctive faith (and the Church's "instinct" is none other than the Holy Spirit who quickens and moves her) the whole Christ is really present under each of the two species. Let us also consider the fact that the Church celebrates the all-embracing mystery of the Redemptive Pasch, as well as all of Christ's various feasts, by celebrating the Eucharist. This shows that the Eucharist contains not only the memorial of Christ in His Passion but the whole Christ, the living and total Christ in whom subsist all His mysteries—mysteries which the liturgy explicates one after the other, but which are all recapitulated and contained in the Eucharist.

An argument such as this seems to carry weight in favor of the Real Presence. If the Eucharist contained Christ only in sign and in figure, would it not have to be varied to signify different mysteries? It is because the Eucharist really contains the whole Christ—that is, in His concrete complexity, in His fundamental and substantial personality—that it can actually celebrate each and every one of Christ's mysteries, and not merely commemorate them symbolically.

(b) *Transubstantiation*

The Council of Trent, in the text cited above, simply expresses in rigorous terms, which exclude any loophole, the immemorial and spontaneous belief of the Church that the Real Presence is of faith. It is impossible to deny or water down this belief without falling into heresy. Even so, the doctrine of the Real Presence does not hold first place in Eucharistic theology. True, without the Real Presence, everything collapses and the Eucharist is literally made empty: it would no longer be a living and life-giving bread; it would no longer constitute an authentic sacrifice. The Real Presence is a part of Eucharistic dogma as a condition *sine qua non*, and not as a theoretical principle. That is why we should not be surprised that the earliest Scriptural or ecclesiastical documents we possess on the

Eucharist do not mention the Real Presence explicitly. And yet, without the Real Presence, these documents are incomprehensible.

The same applies a fortiori to transubstantiation, which constitutes the best explanation of the Real Presence, but which we cannot consider as being immediately proposed to faith. Let us simply say—and that is saying a great deal—that transubstantiation is the best means that reason has been able to discover to explain the non-impossibility of the Real Presence. It is essentially a theological notion, inasmuch as theology is an inquiry into the revealed deposit by human reason. But this rational explanation is so closely bound up with the deposit, it possesses such superiority over all other explanations, that it participates in the certainty of the deposit. Hence the documents of the Church's Magisterium, despite their aversion to using terms that are philosophical in appearance, have on several occasions canonized the term "transubstantiation" either literally (notably, the Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, Chapter 4, Denz. 877), or more frequently by affirming that Christ is "substantially" in the Eucharist.

The other sacraments possess divine power only by participation, and then only transitorily. The water of Baptism does not cease being water, even at the moment when—touching the body of the catechumen at the same time that the Trinitarian invocation is pronounced—this water is the vehicle of regenerative power. In Baptism, the sacrament is accomplished only in the *use* of the matter. The consecration of the matter is only a preparation, a sacramental. Neither the consecration of the baptismal water on Holy Saturday nor even the consecration of the holy oils on Holy Thursday are sacraments or constitute sacraments (even though the consecration of the holy oils is indispensable to the validity of Confirmation and of Extreme Unction).

In the Eucharist however, Christ in person dwells substantially and permanently in the Eucharistic matter. That is why the Eucharist alone among all the sacraments is constituted in the very consecration of its matter, and remains a sacrament as long as its consecrated matter subsists.

The Eucharistic matter is not only an instrument of grace, it is the sign of the Real Presence of Christ: its entire substance is "converted" or changed into the whole substance of the body and blood of Christ. It is in this that transubstantiation consists.

We can form some idea of this transubstantiation, or total con-

version, by analogy with the partial transformations or conversions that we find in nature or in art. A chrysalis becomes a butterfly; a block of stone becomes a statue. While there has been a succession and replacement of one form by another, essentially their being or "substance" has remained the same. For the agent—whether a natural law or an artist—has power only over the accidents of being.

We can conceive of a much more radical change, in which the whole *esse* of one thing is changed into the whole *esse* of another. Such a profound change can only be brought about by the One who has power over the very being of things: the Creator. And that is why the words of the Consecration that work this total conversion are said by the priest "in the person of Christ." They are pronounced by the One "by whom all things were made." This total change calls for a power that is not limited like that of a natural agent or an artist—an infinite power that must necessarily belong to the One who is the author and Master of all being, who is perfect and substantial Act, and not an ordinary agent. The Creator alone can bring this change about.

However, transubstantiation can only be partially assimilated to Creation. They are alike in that they are total, absolute, and demand the intervention of an infinite Agent. They are alike too, and for the same reason, in that they are instantaneous and not progressive, as are the partial conversions that always go through intermediary stages. Transubstantiation is instantaneously accomplished as soon as the words of the Consecration have been spoken, obtaining the fullness of their meaning.

But Creation is accomplished *ex nihilo*. Transubstantiation, on the contrary, has a starting point: the substance of the bread or of the wine, not annihilated but totally converted into the body and blood of Christ. Moreover, and by definition, Creation produces an entirely new being. In transubstantiation, the body and blood of Christ are not created; but the bread and the wine are placed in a new relationship with this pre-existing body and blood that are to replace the substance of the bread and the wine. Finally, whereas the substance of the bread and wine disappears, their accidents remain. And it is above all with regard to this that transubstantiation contains "more difficulties" than does Creation (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 75, a. 8, ad 3).

Difficult as it is to conceive of transubstantiation, since it demands a high degree of metaphysical abstraction—that of being,

which is the deepest of all forms and even of all substances—we must note that only transubstantiation conforms with the powerful and simple words of the Consecration.

If there were impanation (i.e. the presence of Christ in the bread), the priest would have to say: "Here is My body," instead of "This is My body." If there were an annihilation of bread, he would have to say: "This will be My body." If there were a progressive transformation, he would have to say: "This becomes My body." Only transubstantiation adequately accounts for the irrefutable formula: "This is My body" (cf. IIIa, q. 78, a. 5).

(c) *The Mode of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist*

The doctrine of transubstantiation does more than merely justify conceptually the possibility of a Eucharistic consecration terminating in the real and substantial presence of Christ under the appearances of bread. It also has the advantage of reminding us that we must constantly purify the images which, in spite of ourselves, we use to represent the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

Many of the faithful ask themselves insoluble questions, and think they have disturbing doubts on the Real Presence simply because they get no further than childish images that almost always consist in imagining Christ in the Host as a natural person shut up in a little box, broken without being wounded, consumed without being diminished, multiplied without being increased.

The doctrine of transubstantiation reminds us that Christ in His entirety is really present in the Host, and therefore present with all His accidents, all His vital faculties. But all these things are reduced to a mode of substance, which cannot be grasped by our imagination since it relates only to the understanding of being. Hence, in the Eucharist, Christ is not subject to the usual conditions of dimensions, place, and movement. He is present, but He is not contained. He is present *to* the species of bread and wine; strictly speaking, He is not present *under* the species or *in* the species. Real as His presence is, it remains a sacramental presence, that is a presence by mode of a (real) sign.

Just as the thought of an author is not diminished or augmented when copies of his book are either burned or multiplied; just as music is not broken or displaced, decreased or increased, when a record is broken or carried from place to another, or when a listener turns the radio on to hear it or off to reduce it to silence—so Christ

is not diminished when the Hosts are consumed, nor is He increased when new Hosts have been consecrated, or displaced when the ciborium is transferred from one place to another.

Transubstantiation establishes a new relationship between Christ, living and impassible in heaven, and the species of the bread whose substance He replaces. More precisely, this relationship affects only the sacramental species, but does not affect Christ Himself. This permits us to avoid all misplaced romanticism in the consideration of Eucharistic sacrileges. Christ's body is not sullied when a Host falls into the mud or is gnawed by an animal. Evidently, there is an offense against the person of Christ in the measure that these accidents result from culpable negligence. But in their materiality, these things do not wound or dishonor the Savior's body. St. Thomas tells us (IIIa, q. 80, a. 3, ad 3) that nothing is done against the sacrament where the sacrament cannot be recognized for what it is.

Likewise, it is absurd to portray a sacrilegious Communion as an assault upon the flesh of Christ. The very real and serious sacrilege consists in that the very act of the sacrament is a lie. For the communicant, in receiving the body of Christ sacramentally, thus outwardly professes that he loves Him and wants to be united to Him, whereas he is profoundly removed from Him in his heart, which remains attached to sin. The comparison of a sacrilegious communicant to the executioners on Calvary may well produce fine oratorical effects, but it remains foreign to sound theology (IIIa, q. 80, a. 4 and 5).

The same applies to the widespread considerations of Christ hidden under the Eucharistic "veil." They also stem from a childish imagination that represents the Eucharistic Christ as a normally visible personage, who is accidentally concealed from sight by an obstacle that could be removed if absolutely necessary. Christ in the Eucharist is not hidden in such a way that He could be seen if the veil were pulled away. It would be more exact to say that on the contrary Christ is manifested to the eyes of faith by the consecrated species. He is truly present personally, but by mode of substance, and through a sacramental presence that is absolutely *sui generis*. It is not a natural presence, *plus* a Eucharistic veil that might conceal it. It is the Eucharistic presence that cannot be compared to any other. We are not doubting the reality of the Eucharistic pres-

ence when we say that it is incommensurable with any other presence of Christ.²³

Lastly, the theologian must deal cautiously with comparisons between the transubstantiation and the mystery of Christmas. Through the mystery of the Incarnation, Christ *became* man. He really assumed human nature; He appeared to the eyes of men just as He was. In the transubstantiation Christ does not become something new; He appears only to the eyes of faith, and not under a veil but according to the mode of the Eucharistic presence. It is not absolutely correct to say: "Christ comes down upon the altar" or "Christ is born among us," or to compare the corporal on which the Host lies to the swaddling clothes of Bethlehem.²⁴

When we make these distinctions, we do not mean to say that the Christ present in the Eucharist is not the same Christ who preached in Galilee and who now reigns in heaven.²⁵ We simply say that Christ exists here and there under profoundly different modes of being, and that we cannot reason in the same way in both cases.

(d) *The Eucharistic accidents*

Faith affirms that through the Consecration and by virtue of the transubstantiation, the whole substance of the bread is converted into the whole substance of the body of Christ. But to our sense

²³ With regard to all these purifications of the imagination in dealing with Eucharistic realities, read Dom Vonier, *The Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*.

²⁴ "How many say nowadays: I would like to see Him as He really was—His face, His clothes, His shoes. Indeed, you do see Him, you touch Him, you eat Him. . . . Think of your own indignation against the one who betrayed and crucified the Savior; beware that you too may not become guilty of the body and blood of Christ" (St. John Chrysostom, hom. 60 to the people of Antioch, in the Roman Breviary, Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, Lessons 4 and 5). We find an analogous passage in the encyclical *Mediator Dei* (see the following note).

These recommendations are restrained and perfectly justified in a homily. They bring out the realism of our Eucharistic faith. But is it not obvious that to amplify them thoughtlessly would be bad theology? The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is incomparably precious. None the less, we are not forbidden to envy those who saw Christ *in specie propria in Judea*. We can go so far as to say that far from appeasing our desire to see Christ without any intermediary, the Eucharist should make us desire with greater eagerness the day when we shall see Him "as He is."

²⁵ The encyclical *Mediator Dei* is severe with regard to certain verbal blunders on this matter (cf. Par. 134). The useful distinctions are well established by Dom Vonier, *op. cit.*, especially in Chapter 19.

experience, nothing is changed. What was formerly bread has retained the same appearance, color, and taste. How are we to reconcile these equally indubitable data of faith and sensible experience? Obviously, this is one of the greatest Eucharistic wonders.²⁶ By definition, an accident can exist only in something else, that is in a substance (all created beings come either under the category of substance or accident). It is substance that gives an accident a being that it cannot possess by itself. Moreover, an accident can subsist only in the substance whose nature it reveals. Substance being imperceptible to the senses in itself, it reveals itself only through its accidents. And since the accidents—and they alone—are known by the senses, they permit the intelligence to attain to the substance which is unknowable in itself.

This second characteristic of accidents needs to be mentioned, for it brings out quite emphatically the anomaly involved in the fact that the Eucharistic accidents not only subsist outside of their own substance, but subsist in a substance that is foreign to them. Indeed, we cannot say that after the substance of bread has disap-

²⁶ We have deliberately avoided talking about Eucharistic "miracles." This expression can be taken in two very different ways. Certain inexplicable and exceptional facts that stem from sensible experience are often called "Eucharistic miracles": for example, Jesus crucified or the Child Jesus appears in the Host; a corporal appears to be stained with blood; a host remains suspended in mid-air, and is not consumed by fire, etc. These are miracles in the strict sense of the term, and they belong to the general doctrine of miracles and apparitions.

But certain constant elements of Eucharistic doctrine are likewise at times called "Eucharistic miracles": the fact that mere words convert bread into the body of Christ; that the Hosts can be multiplied without increasing the body of Christ; that the accidents of bread subsist without the support of its substance, etc. It is inaccurate to call such facts miracles. They are miracles merely in the sense that they are outside the normal course of things. They are not miracles: 1) because they occur necessarily, given certain conditions; 2) because they are inaccessible to the senses; 3) because far from arousing faith they demand a faith that is already perfect because they are accomplished in mystery. On the other hand, miracles in the strict sense are: 1) unpredictable; 2) subject to external controls; 3) worked for unbelievers rather than for believers (cf. I Cor. 14:22).

The "Eucharistic miracles" in the first sense have nothing in common with the "Eucharistic miracles" in the second sense. They are not a simple manifestation of what habitually happens in the Eucharist in a hidden way. They can awaken or confirm the faith of a given individual; but a theology of the Eucharist cannot be built upon the miracles of Faverney or Bolsena. Likewise, the apparitions of Lourdes can encourage our devotion to the Blessed Virgin, but we would do better to search Scripture if we want to build a Marian theology.

peared the accidents of bread inhere in the substance of Christ's body. This would no longer be outside the normal laws of substance and accident: it would be contrary to these laws. We would no longer be confronting a mystery, but an absurdity. Moreover, Christ's impassible and glorious body at this very moment cannot be modified by the inherence of foreign and superadded accidents.

We are thus obliged to admit that the accidents of bread, after the Consecration, subsist by themselves and so to speak "in the air." The only explanation for this subsistence is a special intervention by God's power.

Since an effect depends more upon the first cause than on the second, God who is the first cause both of substance and accident, can by His unlimited power preserve an accident in existence when the substance is withdrawn whereby it was preserved in existence as by its proper cause, just as without natural causes He can produce other effects of natural causes, even as He formed a human body in the Virgin's womb, without the seed of man (*Summa*, IIIa, q. 77, a. 1, c.).

The thing that allows substance to keep the accident in being is that substance possesses more being, and has a greater right to be called being, than does the accident, which is essentially dependent upon and inherent in a substance. But God, who is Being itself, can, for much greater reason, take the place of that whose property it is to exist "not in another."

While St. Thomas does see divine intervention in this instance he does not see it elsewhere, i.e. he does not multiply the "miracles." Like the good Aristotelian that he is, he admits that accidents inhere in substance in a certain order. The first of these accidents, which supports all the others, is extended quantity. Once this accident has been sustained in being without the presence of a substance, the other accidents are maintained in being by their inherence in this primary accident, which acts in the manner of a substance. Thus, apart from the initial divine intervention, the natural order is respected, and the accidents of bread—despite the absence of their customary substance—act exactly as they usually do. The Eucharistic bread, although it is no longer bread, will act exactly as if it were bread: it will keep the form, weight, color, and savor of bread; it will be capable of nourishing, spoiling, and being corrupted just like ordinary bread.

Evidently, it is permissible to refuse to accept this explanation, which stems from a metaphysics that is exterior to the revealed de-

posit. And yet it is difficult to offer any other explanation, and it cannot be denied that this one satisfies human reason by its simplicity and economy, and by its respect for the data both of experience and of faith.

A serious difficulty still remains, not on the level of being but on the level of knowledge. If accidents are properties of substance, if their function is to show themselves to the senses so as to reveal substance to the mind, what is the role of these accidents that lead us to infer from their presence the existence of a substance of bread which has in actual fact disappeared? Can we not say that these accidents are fallacious and that they hide the body of Christ from us?

St. Thomas, being a good realist, will not admit that our senses can ever deceive us. His religious spirit refuses to see a fraud in the greatest of all the sacraments. For the senses are content to record what they perceive. When they ascertain the presence of the accidents of bread in the Eucharist, they are simply doing their duty in all honesty. For the accidents of bread are there. There can be no error in the senses, but only in the intellect, which alone is capable of making judgments and which concludes from the existence of certain accidents to the existence of a certain substance.

The senses reveal the accidents of bread to our intellect. And the intellect, which is not left to its own devices but enlightened by faith, must infer from the messages delivered by the senses that these accidents of bread clothe—and therefore reveal—the presence of a substance that is the body of Christ. Far from deceiving us, the senses here perform their role perfectly, and the accidents actually reveal the body of Christ far more than they hide it.

That is why the documents of the Magisterium prefer to use the term “species” rather than “accidents” in this connection. For the term “accident” connotes a metaphysics of substance, whereas the term “species” (from the Latin *species*, “that which can be seen,” “that which makes manifest”) clearly indicates the dynamic and cognitive role of the sacramental appearances. This term “appearances,” although it is more common, should be avoided because it implies opposition to reality. It is therefore with good reason that the language of Christianity clings to the expressions “the sacred species” or “the consecrated species.” These words remind us that the Eucharistic matter is much less a screen for the mystery than an outline of its significance. Even when the bread has been con-

secrated, even when its substance has disappeared, it still evokes Christ, "the bread that comes down from heaven," the grain of wheat thrown into the ground to die and bring forth fruit.

(e) *The Eucharistic Sacrifice*

We have amply explained and justified the mystery of the Real Presence, as far as human reason can. Let us repeat that this mystery is not the most important one in the structure of the Eucharist: it is a necessary means, an indispensable condition; it is not an end. Christ did not institute the Eucharist in order to remain with us. He already abides in the soul of each of His faithful through grace (cf. Jn. 14:21; 15:10, etc.). He abides with us through His Church, since we are His body (Mt. 28:20). The priest in turn does not consecrate so that Christ may remain among us and be adored under the species of bread. The fundamental reason for the Eucharistic Consecration is the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice. It is of faith that every Eucharistic celebration constitutes a commemorative sacrifice that is also a new and real sacrifice. This sacrifice would not be real if the Christ who died and rose again were not really present under the species of bread and wine. And it is because Christ is really present under these species, that we adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament.

We have yet to study how the Eucharistic sacrifice is an authentic sacrifice. This is a difficult question, especially since the Reformation. Theologians have spent themselves in laborious efforts to solve it, and the very multiplicity and complexity of these efforts is evidence of their futility. We should be wasting our time if we tried to set forth even their principal theories.

We shall merely indicate why they seem to us to have served no purpose. This analysis will have more than merely the comparative usefulness of a critique. It will enable us to clear the ground for what we hope will be a constructive presentation.

We believe everyone agrees in affirming that the Christ present in the Eucharist is the immolated Christ. This is clearly signified by certain words of the institution, even if they have not been retained literally in the formula of Consecration: This is My body, *which is being given for you*. This is My blood, *which is being shed* (or *which shall be shed*). Moreover, it is usually pointed out that the successive consecration of the bread and of the wine realizes sacramentally the separated presence of the body and the blood (*ex vi*

verborum, in virtute sacramenti, see p. 116 above). Now this reveals the victim of a violent death, whose blood has been shed outside the body. Valid as this argument may be, it must be handled with discretion.

True, the successive consecration can signify the presence of the immolated Christ. Can we say that it produces this presence, without exaggeration and without danger of embracing the inadmissible theories of "a sword of the word" that would immolate Christ? Besides, even when this separation is looked upon only as a sign, we must admit that it is a sign whose language is not obvious. The separation is a violent state for the body and the blood, and not for the bread and the wine which alone are visible to the eyes and for which it is normal to be separated. If there is a sign at all, it is an indirect sign, on the level of the *res et sacramentum*. Thus we can say that baptismal character is a sign, although invisible in itself. The twofold matter in the Eucharist is intended to signify a complete meal more than a sacrifice.

Granted, as St. Thomas repeatedly affirms and as no one doubts, that the Christ made present on the altar is the *Christus passus*, the immolated Christ, does it follow that the Mass is a sacrifice? A sacrifice is an action, it is not a state. It still must be explained how the Consecration does not stop at rendering the immolated Christ present, but immolates Him. This is the precise question facing the theologian, and it perplexes him all the more in that the formula of Consecration is not dynamic and imperative, but indicative; also the Mass in its entirety presents itself as a serene, hieratic, and non-violent action; and finally the Mass is beyond any doubt a memorial. But if the Mass commemorates the sacrifice of Christ, how can it at the same time accomplish it?

St. Thomas is content to say that the Mass is a sacrifice because it is the memorial of a sacrifice. We must admit that this answer does not satisfy us. This is not to imply that we are accusing St. Thomas of incompleteness. He knew how to keep silence in the face of a mystery—one that had not yet been transformed into a problem by later heresies. Above all, we think this problem did not arise for him for the two following reasons: 1) he had a correct idea of sacrifice; 2) the Mass for him was not an intellectual plan to be analyzed, but a complex fact of worship to be accepted as a whole with a religious rather than a philosophical spirit.

What, then, is sacrifice? It is an error in method to start out by

trying to define "sacrifice in general," analyzing pagan sacrifices and the sacrifices of the Old Law; and then set out to prove—by the most subtle arguments!—that the Eucharistic sacrifice, for all its particularities, fits into this category. This is a bad method because it forgets that the Eucharistic sacrifice is the perfect sacrifice, and that consequently it is transcendent and absolutely *sui generis*. The sacrifices of the Old Law can be figures of the Eucharistic sacrifice. However, while figures as a general rule precede the truth, it is the truth that makes known the figure it supersedes and then reveals aspects of the figure that help us to better understand the truth. For example, the sacrifice of Calvary enables us to grasp the complete figurative sense of the paschal lamb; the institution of the Eucharist reveals the prophetic significance of the manna.

This error in method has often been confirmed by the dearth of results. Rational analysis of sacrifice has led to the placing of bloody destruction, or what is generally called immolation, in the forefront. How, in this method, can we discover a "true sacrifice" in an act of worship that is "unbloody," as the Council of Trent, conforming to the evidence, calls the Mass? In the absence of blood, we look for an actual or virtual destruction, a moral or physical abasement of Christ. We will succeed only with difficulty, and meanwhile we may forget that the impassible and glorious Christ cannot suffer any real diminution. In this view, the sacrifice would remain purely fictitious—imaginary in the strict sense of the word.

We shall profit greatly by returning to the deeply religious intuitions of an Augustine or a Thomas Aquinas. We shall look to them to enlighten us on the fundamental nature of sacrifice. St. Thomas analyzes the constitutive elements of the very being of sacrifice. St. Augustine's definition is concerned with the end and the sanctifying aspect of this act. While these two definitions start from different points of view—one being more analytical, the other more spiritual—they agree with and complement each other.

For the Angelic Doctor (IIa IIae, q. 85, a. 3, ad 3), sacrifice is the perfect act of the virtue of religion: an exterior act of worship (this point must never be lost sight of) that enables the creature to give the best expression to its recognition of the Creator's absolute rights. It is the immolation that gives sacrifice this unique value. Now St. Thomas does not define immolation as necessarily being a putting to death or a destruction, whether bloody or otherwise, but as an action, whatever it may be, that proclaims the sov-

ereign rights of the Creator. We see at once that such a definition is analogical and can apply to acts that are very different in appearance, such as the bloody sacrifice of the paschal lamb or the sacrifice of bread and wine offered up by Melchisedech.

Let us add a useful clarification: the immolation is never added to the simple offering, as if they were two successive acts of which only the second was sacrificial. In truth, the offering is the genus, of which the sacrifice is a species, the immolation being the specific difference which contracts the genus "offering" into the species "sacrifice." The sacrifice does not come after the offering. But certain offerings that are characterized by an immolation happen to be sacrifices, and every sacrifice is as it were wrapped in an offering. A sacrifice is not constituted by the successive addition of an offering and an immolation: it is the offering in its entirety that is manifested as a sacrifice through the characteristic of immolation.

St. Augustine does not devote himself to such a searching analysis of sacrifice. (We might mention in passing that we have added our own clarifications to the Thomist theory, but we believe they are strictly in accord with this theory, which we have merely explicated.) However, St. Augustine preserves the fundamental distinction between sacrifice in the strict sense, which is an expressive act of worship, and the spiritual soul of this sacrifice, which for St. Thomas is the virtue of religion. It should be noted that neither St. Thomas nor St. Augustine speak of a "heavenly sacrifice," unless this term be given an analogical and metaphorical value.

Secondly, St. Augustine stresses the unitive, beatifying power of sacrifice. It is an act whose essential purpose is to unite the creature to God and thus to make the creature attain its end, that of happiness. This does not exclude the necessity in certain cases of an immolation that may be a bloody death, but this is only a relative means. In St. Augustine's view, the essential element of sacrifice is its unifying and beatifying value. Here St. Augustine sees eye-to-eye with St. Thomas, for whom sacrifice, according to its etymology, consists in "making-sacred"—*sacrum—facere*.²⁷

We shall now apply this data specifically to the Eucharistic sacrifice. But far from narrowing this sacrifice to the strict sacramental minimum of matter and form, we shall consider it in its full scope, keeping in mind not only its entire context as an act of worship,

²⁷ The Augustinian doctrine of sacrifice is admirably presented by Father de Montcheuil, *Mélanges théologiques*, Chapter 2: "Sacrifice et sacrement."

but also its institution at the Last Supper, its relationship to the sacrifice of the Cross and to all the Biblical figures that preceded and threw light upon it. The subject is an immense one. We shall reduce it to certain details and ask the reader to fill in those that we are unable to include here.

(f) *The Sacrifice of the Cross*

Who would doubt that the Cross is a sacrifice, looking at this immolation suspended between heaven and earth, and seeing so much blood spilled? However it is important that we see in this very real sacrifice not merely a drama, but a priestly celebration. Christ is not only the victim, but also the priest, as the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us. Having been ordained a priest for all eternity after the manner of Melchisedech (priest and king, the one priest, the king of peace), Christ exercised His priesthood on the Cross: that was "His hour," the hour for which He had come into the world.

Christ was not taken by surprise. He had foretold His own Passion and death. He willingly went up to Jerusalem, He declared that no man was taking His life from Him, but that He had the power to give it and to take it back. His agony in the Garden expressed His voluntary acceptance of His "chalice." He went out to meet those who came to arrest Him and spontaneously told them who He was. When He was dragged from tribunal to tribunal, He chose either to be silent (like a sheep, He did not open His mouth; He offered Himself willingly); or else to speak with great exactitude the very words that would bring about His death sentence. On Calvary and on the Cross, He did not utter a word of complaint; all His words manifested perfect mastery not only of Himself but of His kingdom and His heritage, the certitude of having fulfilled the prophecies and of having accomplished His Father's will to the end.

Christ's sacrifice was not only priestly, but also sacramental. To accomplish the salvation of the human race, there was no need of such great suffering. Christ's sufferings were necessary only in order to better express both His obedience to His Father and His love for men. This total sacrifice also permitted Him to include in advance the sacrifice of the whole human race, that must renounce itself in order to return to the Father, from whom sin has separated it; and that must give itself filially in order to escape the temptation

to make itself God, a temptation which will always haunt creatures endowed with autonomy and set up on the summit of creation.²⁸

The immolation of the Cross, sanctioned and accepted by the glories of the Resurrection and the Ascension, truly produces the effect of a sacrifice. Christ really consecrated Himself and consecrated us (Jn. 17:19). He not only accomplished a work of redemption, of paying a debt, and wiping out a sin, He reunited us to the Father and gave us true happiness by opening heaven to us. It was a perfect sacrifice, transcending all others. Jesus the Priest gave Himself so totally that He was also the Victim. This Victim was also the Priest. The perfection of the sacrifice of the Cross stems from the fact that in a single person the three terms of every sacrifice were present: the priest, the victim, and the altar.²⁹ We shall see this same characteristic in the sacrifices of the Last Supper and of the Mass, which assures their identity with the sacrifice of the Cross.

(g) *The Sacrifice of the Last Supper*

The sacrifice of the Last Supper is one with the sacrifice of the Cross. It is caught up in the same movement of "Pasch" or passage. It is at the beginning of the account of the Last Supper (more precisely, of the washing of the feet) that St. John tells us: "Before the Feast of Passover, Jesus, knowing that the hour had come for him to pass out of this world to the Father . . ." (Jn. 13:1). On Palm Sunday, and on Holy Tuesday and Wednesday, Holy Mother Church begins the chanting of "the Passion" with the account of

²⁸ We are taking these ideas from Father de Montcheuil's article, cited above.

²⁹ Modern theology has almost entirely neglected this theme of the identity of Christ and the altar, affirmed by the Pontifical (the ordination of subdeacons). There are many admirable texts on this subject in M. de la Taille's *Mystery of Faith*, eluc. 13. Let us merely cite the following:

"O blessed place (the cenacle)! No one has seen, now sees, or will see such wonders as this: The Lord become the true altar, the bread, and the chalice of salvation. . . . He Himself is the altar and the lamb, the victim and the sacrificer, the priest and the food" (St. Ephrem, Hymn No. 3 of the Crucifixion, Stanza 10).

"He offered Himself to abolish the sacrifice of the Old Testament, by sacrificing for the whole world a more perfect and living victim; for He Himself is the victim, He is the sacrifice, He is the priest, and He is the altar" (St. Epiphaneus, *Adv. haer.*, 55:4).

"All of you, run together toward the one Jesus Christ who came forth from the one Father and returned to the One; run toward Him as toward the one temple of God and the one altar" (St. Ignatius, *Magn.* 7:2).

the Last Supper. It was during the Last Supper that Jesus sent Judas to do "what he had to do," that is, to unloose the fury of the Passion (Jn. 13:27). And it was from the Cenacle that Jesus and His followers went to Gethsemani. The Last Supper called for the Cross. Better still, the Last Supper is the figure of the Cross and contains the Cross.

At first glance, there is nothing in common between this fraternal meal and the ignominious death on Golgotha. But let us look more closely. The Last Supper opened with the washing of the feet, during which Jesus showed Himself to be the One who had come not to be served but to serve, to be the "servant" foretold by Isaiah, as He made clear by the words He spoke at that very moment: "The Son of man did not come to be served but to serve." And on a previous occasion He had added: "and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45; cf. Is. 53).

The meal itself was a paschal meal. It is impossible to refute the explicit affirmations of the Synoptics on this point. It is incumbent upon exegetes to reconcile them with St. John's, who held that the Pasch began only twenty-four hours later.³⁰ In what appears to be a contradiction from the point of view of Scriptural apologetics is seen by the theologian as a confirmation and a convergence. For John, the death on Calvary is a Pasch; for the Synoptics, the Last Supper is a Pasch. How can we fail to deduce from this the identity of the Cross and the Last Supper?

If the Last Supper is a Pasch, it must also be a sacrifice. For not only is the immolation of the lamb a sacrifice, but its commemorative eating is itself a sacrifice (Ex. 12:27). The words of the Con-

³⁰ The reconciliation proposed by Father Lagrange seems to us to conform perfectly to the data of the problem. According to St. John, the Pasch was celebrated by the Jewish people as a whole on Friday night. In the Synoptics we see the disciples prepare the paschal meal for Thursday night. We may therefore suppose that because of the multitude of pilgrims, a group of provincial folk like Jesus and His disciples could anticipate the Pasch. Let us confirm Father Lagrange's hypothesis by a housewife's argument: the owners of the Cenacle that Jesus borrowed, must have celebrated the Pasch, too. It is very probable that they were to celebrate it on the day of the feast. Hence, their guests had to choose another day.

Father Bouyer (*La Maison-Dieu*, No. 18, p. 43), who denies that the Last Supper was a paschal meal, remarks that Luke 22:15-16 is "ambiguous." Granted, but other texts are difficult to elude, such as: "The Master says, 'Where is my guest chamber, that I may eat the passover there with my disciples?'" (Mk. 14:14).

secration also affirm the celebration of a sacrifice: the body delivered up, the blood shed, and above all the mention of the chalice which, for Jesus, always designates the voluntary acceptance of suffering (Mt. 20:22; 26:39; Jn. 18:11). This is the chalice of the New Covenant, parallel to the Old Covenant which was sealed in a bloody sacrifice by Abraham (Gen. 22:13), and by Moses (Ex. 24:6).

After Jesus had instituted the Eucharist, He said: "Do this in remembrance of me." The repetition of His gesture is a memorial, but it is also a new sacrificial act, for He did not say: "Do something similar" but: "Do *this*."

Here as on the Cross, there is an identification of victim, priest, and altar in a single person who is Christ. But at the Last Supper, whereas the priest was Christ in person, *in specie propria*, the victim was Christ *in specie aliena*, under the sacramental species of bread and wine.

(h) *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

The Mass is nothing else but the reiteration of the Last Supper. It was at the Last Supper that Christ said: "Do this in remembrance of me." The priest at Mass repeats the gestures and words of Christ at the Last Supper (not the words or gestures of Christ on the Cross), using a table covered with cloths, some bread and wine, a plate and a cup—all as at the Last Supper—in the context of thanksgiving, of a sacrifice of praise like that of the Last Supper.

Since we have seen that the Last Supper is a true sacrifice, we could content ourselves with proving that the Mass is a sacrifice by showing that it consists in reiterating the Last Supper. That also suffices to prove that the Mass contains and represents the sacrifice of the Cross, since the Last Supper contained and represented the sacrifice of Calvary.

However, we must add that the Mass, as the Church has organized it, manifests by itself that it is a sacrifice.

The priest who celebrates Mass appears clothed in vestments that are intended to mask his individual personality and to suggest that he has put on another personage.

The offering of the bread and wine itself is not merely the preparation of a meal. Through the solemnity that accompanies it and the prayers that have adorned it through the course of the centuries, by the fact that the offerings are received by the priest who then places

them on the altar, this offering has a clearly sacrificial character.

The subsequent offering of the consecrated bread and wine commemorates the Passion of Christ, His Resurrection, and His Ascension, while simultaneously causing them to be present.

The banquet table is not simply a table, and hence it is made of stone and not wood. It is a sacred table, the altar for a sacrifice. This altar is surmounted by the crucifix, and the priest makes many signs of the cross to manifest that by renewing the Last Supper he is representing the Cross of Calvary.

This sacrifice is a Pasch. For the first Christians, the celebration of this Pasch was not an annual but a weekly feast, coinciding with the celebration of Sunday, the eighth day, the day of the Lord, when they assembled to await His return, or at least to realize His presence according to the ancient prayer *Maran atha*, which signifies either "The Lord comes" or "Come, Lord!" (I Cor. 16:22; Ap. 22:20).

It is clear that this liturgical function, through its hymns, rites, and solemnity, is offered up to God alone. The Communion that completes the sacrifice realizes the unifying and beatifying end of sacrifice, according to St. Augustine.

Finally, the authenticity of the Consecration that we studied with regard to the Real Presence, assures us that Christ is as truly present under the species of bread as He was at the Last Supper, and that this sacramental sacrifice is not merely a symbol. Here again we find the one and only mark of the true sacrifice of Christ. But here everything is sacramental: The victim is Christ, under the species of bread as at the Last Supper; the priest is also Christ in the sacramental person of the human priest who speaks in Christ's name when he says "This is My body," and who, as we shall see, represents the whole Church; and finally the stone altar represents Christ (according to the Pontifical in the ordination of subdeacons), and the ceremonial for the consecration of the altar consists in bringing out its sacramental identity with Christ.

3. THE SACRIFICE OF UNITY

We have not said all there is to say on the Eucharist when we have shown that the Mass, through the intermediary of the Last Supper, represents and contains the sacrifice of the Cross. We have still to inquire into the fundamental reason for the sacrifice of the Cross and why this sacrifice, fully sufficient to save humanity, must

be re-presented, that is, sacramentally renewed by the Eucharistic sacrifice.

Christ died "that he might gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad" (Jn. 11:52). St. Paul makes the final end of Christ's sacrifice still more explicit:

But now in Christ Jesus you, who were once afar off, have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, he it is who has made both one, and has broken down the intervening wall of the enclosure, the enmity . . . that he . . . might create in himself one new man, and make peace and reconcile both in one body to God by the cross. . . . And coming, he announced the good tidings of peace to you who were afar off, and of peace to those who were near; because through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father" (Eph. 2:13-18).

The paschal sacrifice already was intended to gather up in one people those who were not one people but had been dispersed and oppressed in servitude and idolatry in foreign lands. Their liberation and their march across the desert toward the Promised Land ended in the celebration of the Covenant which united God with His people, considered as a single person, as a single spouse, in a marriage sealed by fidelity (in the twofold sense of faith in God and conjugal constancy).

The new Pasch has as its purpose the sealing of the new and eternal Covenant, of constituting a new people of God, "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16), united in itself and united to its God in a more intimate and lasting way.

The whole discourse of the Last Supper makes clear that the end of this new Covenant is to consummate a mystery of unity. This discourse begins with the allegory of the vine, and closes with the priestly prayer of Christ. The institution of the new sacrament and of the new Testament (or the new Covenant) is accompanied by the promulgation of the new Law, the new commandment: the law of fraternal charity (cf. Jn. 13:34).

Thus the restoration made by Christ repairs the destruction worked by the sin of the first Adam, which had separated man from God and "rent asunder the families of nations" (Collect for feast of Christ the King). The sacrifice of Jesus gives them "access in one Spirit to the Father" and likewise unites them into "one body."³¹

But if this work of reunion has been accomplished, and in an un-

³¹ Cf. also the Postcommunion for Easter: "Pour forth upon us, O Lord, the Spirit of Thy love, that by Thy loving kindness Thou mayest make to be of one mind, those whom Thou hast fed with these Paschal sacraments."

questionably satisfactory way, by the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, why repeat it by the sacramental reiteration of this same sacrifice? Because the reunion of all Christians—the Church—is at once accomplished and still to be accomplished. It has been accomplished by the Cross and by the completion of the Paschal mystery on Pentecost (through which the Church has been Catholic, that is universal in law and in fact, from the first moment of her foundation). The work is still to be done for each of the men who is to come into the world until the end of time, by his individual incorporation into the Body of Christ; and this is the work of Baptism by which each of us is dead to sin and risen to the life of God as if he himself had suffered the Passion of Christ.

The reunion of all Christians is still to be accomplished by an increasingly real and profound incorporation into and recapitulation of the whole Church. Even though the Church is no longer under the economy of expectation and preparation, as was the Synagogue, she is not yet under the economy of total fulfillment. She continues in “her exile from the Lord” (cf. II Cor. 5:6), although she is continually coming closer to Him. She remains under the regime of those very real but figurative signs that are the sacraments. Endowed with a unity given her from the first moment by the Cross and by Pentecost, the Church must continue to progress in the Paschal mystery and to achieve a more perfect unity through the Eucharist. Baptism is the sacrament of faith, that is of foundation and initiation. The Eucharist is the sacrament of charity, that is of an indefinitely growing perfection and of an always more complete unification. That is why the prayers of the Canon of the Mass are all ordered to the achievement of her unity and the strengthening of her peace.

The Body of Christ, really present in the Eucharist, is at once the rallying point, the bond of unity, and the figure of the Body of Christ which is the Church (cf. Col. 1:24). When we who are already His “mystical” body eat His Eucharistic body, we become Christ more and more, and we become assimilated to the only-begotten, to the Son of God, in order to attain perfect unity. Father de Lubac, in his beautiful book *Corpus mysticum*, proves by innumerable texts that this expression, unknown to St. Paul, originally designated the *sacramental body* of Christ (the word “mystical” is the equivalent of sacramental, just as the word “mystery” is equivalent to sacrament). It is because this sacramental body is the bond

and the figure of the Church that, by strict synonymy the expression "Mystical Body" came to signify the Church. For, as the Secret for the feast of Corpus Christi says, "We beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully grant to Thy Church the gifts of unity and peace, which are mystically (sacramentally) signified beneath the gifts we offer."

If we are to speak of the Eucharist as "the mystery of faith," we must not think of it as a mystery among other mysteries of our religion, as are the ineffable wonders of the transubstantiation and the Real Presence. The Eucharist is *the* mystery of faith, the very mystery of Christ Himself, "hidden from eternity in God" (Eph. 3:9), a mystery of unity and reunion around this only Son, this only One who is the supreme flower of God's people, and who is destined to recapitulate this people in the unity of one body.

(a) *The Sacrifice of the Church*

As the sacrifice of the Body of Christ, the Mass is therefore the sacrifice of the Church. According to St. Augustine's formula, when the Church celebrates this sacrifice she learns that she offers Him up and she is likewise offered up.³² If we were called upon to define the Mass in a single sentence we would say that whereas the Cross is the sacrifice of Christ, the Mass is the sacrifice of the Church. But on the Cross it was Christ alone *in specie propria*, in His own state and aspect, who offered and was offered. Since He alone was holy, He alone was the God-man, He alone could offer a sacrifice at once pleasing to the Father and valid for the whole human race that He contained within Himself. By this first and unique sacrifice, He sanctified humanity; in bringing forth the Church, born from His open side He gave Himself a body charged with sacramentally prolonging His priestly action. And He entrusted His sacrifice to this Spouse as a heritage that is rightfully hers.³³

Since the Church is really the Body of Christ, she cannot offer up the sacrifice of His Eucharistic body without offering herself up. True, her sacrifice is first of all Christ's sacrifice, for there is no Church without Christ any more than there can be a living body without a head, or a living vine-stock without a vine, or a solid structure without a cornerstone. But this sacrifice is no longer the

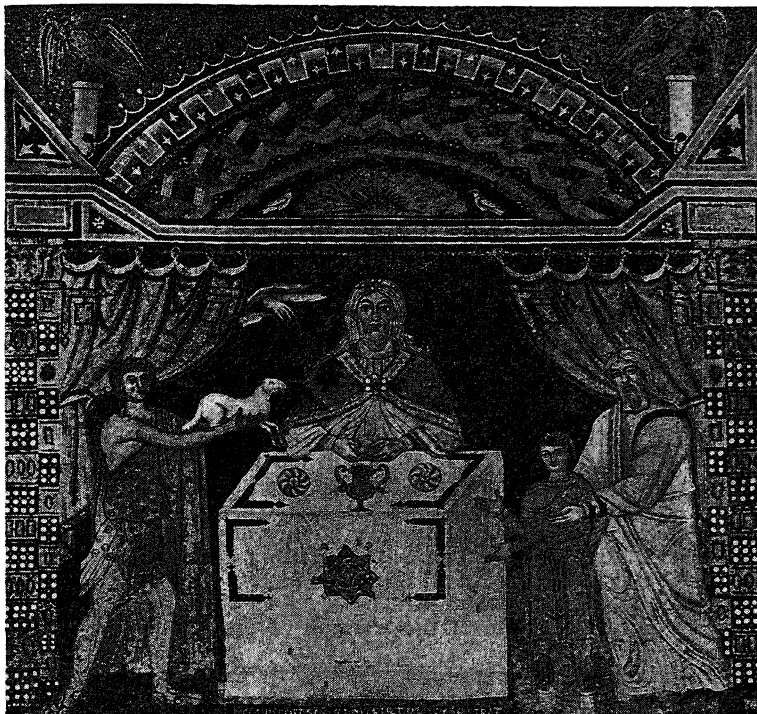
³² See *The City of God*, Book 10, Chapters 5 and 6 (text cited in the appendix of Father Bouyer's work, *The Paschal Mystery*).

³³ "To leave His beloved Spouse, the Church, a visible sacrifice. . . ." (Council of Trent, Sess. XXII, Chapter 1, Denz. No. 938).

The walls of basilicas are suited to large-scale representation of the Biblical prefigurations of the Eucharist. Here is a mosaic that dates back to the sixth century, in the church of Saint-Apollinarius-in-Classe in Ravenna. It represents the three sacrifices that the prayer *Supra quae* calls to mind in every Mass according to the Latin rite: the sacrifices of Abel, Abraham, and Melchisedech.

In the center, Melchisedech, wearing the cope, holds the bread of sacrifice. His royal brow is wreathed with a gold chain adorned with gems set between four pearls. This is the diadem of Salem. The table is covered with a cloth adorned with gems and a star. Two loaves of bread and a cup are upon the table. To his right, Abel holds the lamb of his sacrifice. To his left, Isaac is presented by his father Abraham. Above, the hand of God blesses all these gifts and renders them pleasing to Himself.

Here we have several figures—bread, the cup, the lamb, Isaac—but only one offering, the offering of Christ. Likewise, there are several figures of the one who offers, but only one priest, Christ.



sacrifice of Christ the individual. It is the sacrifice of the total Christ, of Christ recapitulating His people.

Thus every Mass goes from the Church to the Church. It is the Church, begotten of the Cross and Baptism and already unified by preceding Masses, that gathers together to celebrate the Mass today. It is the Church that offers up bread and wine, and becomes aware of herself in this offering in which she is already represented and unified. It is the whole Church of baptized Christians that sings the thanksgiving and celebrates the sacrifice of praise. It is the whole Church, gathered in a single man—the priest (who is not only the president of the assembly but the minister representing Christ and acting as His personal instrument)—that consecrates the bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ.³⁴

Then the Church is at once in the nave *in specie propria*, and on the altar sacramentally. Then the Church (“we Your ministers and all Your holy people”) offers up the Church together with Christ as a pure host to the august majesty of the Father. Even before the Communion, which will make them visibly participate in the sacrifice of the altar, all will be unified, “even though many, forming but one body and one bread.” And this offering of the Church will be carried by the hands of the holy angel to the altar of heaven: this is the ultimate end of the sacrifice, the consummation of the Church in total and definitive unity, in the immediacy of heaven.

And the bread and the wine, the body and blood of Christ, the Church offers up—all are raised up to heaven as a sign of the eternal glorification of the Father, by Him, with Him, and in Him. And the Church as offerer seals this offering with the mysterious words of faith, adherence, and the communion of the people with one another and with the priest. Their “Amen” is the prelude to the great and final Amen of the triumph of the Lamb (see Apoc. 7:12).

But this mysterious communion realized by the Consecration and by the offering that the Consecration includes is incessantly asked for by the great prayer of the Canon and sealed by the family prayer, the “Our Father.” And it is clearly manifested by the communal eating of the Body of Christ, in which His “Mystical Body”

³⁴ The Encyclical *Mediator Dei* (Par. 84) clearly shows that the reason the priest represents the people is not because his priesthood emanates from the people, but because his priesthood makes of him the representative of Christ who contains His whole people.

expresses its unity and also draws this unity from its very source. We have seen that the Offertory simply stresses this general character of the Mass as a whole, namely that it is an offering from beginning to end.

Analogously, we can say that the whole Mass is a communion, since in its entirety it is an act of the Church; for the "Communion" is only a "part" of the Mass and the conclusion of the sacrifice in the form of a meal. The Communion simply proclaims this character of the Mass by realizing it in the most undeniable and concrete manner. Thus the Mass is a communion from start to finish—the union of the faithful with Christ, the union of the faithful among themselves.

We take the liberty of stressing two corollaries of this truth that are important for pastoral catechesis and practice. To receive Holy Communion apart from the Mass, without sufficient reason, is not only a regrettable anomaly, but also pure nonsense. And on the other hand, a Mass at which the faithful do not receive Communion but in which they participate actively is a perfectly valid and complete Mass (for the priest receives Communion in their name). That is evidently why the Church has made attendance at Mass every Sunday a serious obligation, while she commands Communion only once a year, during the Easter season.³⁵

After unity has found the most perfect expression and consummation through Communion, the Church pronounces a thanksgiving in the Postcommunion in which she is not content to give thanks for the gift received and already past, but also looks to the future. Having become more unified and holier, she will return to her task in the world with more vigor, and she will soon be reunited again for a Mass that will be all the more perfect in the measure that the Church that offers and is offered up in it is holier and more unified. (Actually the Church's holiness and oneness are the same thing, for she is holy only through her union with the one Christ.) Thus from Mass to Mass, the Church advances toward

³⁵ The Magisterium has forbidden the condemnation of Masses "at which only the priest receives Communion sacramentally" (Council of Trent, Sess. XXII, Can. 8, Denz. 955; cf. also condemnation of the Synod of Pistoia, Denz. 1528). The encyclical *Mediator Dei* (Par. 95 and 113) has also insisted on the legitimacy of private Masses. Mass is a laetific and propitiatory sacrifice that is efficacious *ex opere operato*, and not merely a memorial and symbolic meal.

her consummation, and the Postcommunions often look to this ultimate future that will consist in the eternal possession of heaven.

(b) *The Eucharist and the Return of Christ*

St. Paul had said: "For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes" (I Cor. 11:26). The Church is a people in motion. While she is superior to the Synagogue because she possesses realities and not merely promises, she continues to live under an economy of signs and figures that are destined to vanish and give place to the unveiled reality. Just as the manna ceased falling when the chosen people emerged from the desert and entered the promised land, so the sacraments—and the Eucharist which is the greatest of them—will disappear when we see God face to face. The "bread of wayfarers" will no longer have any reason for existence when we eat the "bread of angels" by communing with the Word directly and continuously.

But the Eucharist is not opposed to the beatific vision as its contrary. The Eucharist prepares and announces the beatific vision. In this "sacred banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His passion (is) renewed, the mind filled with grace"; but in addition "a pledge of future glory (is) given to us" (Antiphon, *O sacrum convivium*). The Eucharist is the sacrament and the foretaste of heaven. Those who eat of it will not die (Jn. 6:55). It is the seed and the leaven of eternal resurrection. That is why the Church demands that the Eucharist be given in great solemnity to the dying, as "the most necessary help for immortality."³⁶

Here we find the eschatological significance of the banquet, a figure of heaven.³⁷ Every Eucharist and every Mass draws us closer to Christ's return. Such was the meaning of the Sunday Eucharist among the first Christians and of the vigil that preceded it. Such was the meaning of the *Maran atha*: "the Lord comes," or "Come, Lord Jesus!" Several of the liturgies specify in their Eucharistic formulas that the sacrifice of the Body of Christ commemorates His glorious return. The Roman liturgy does not make mention of it. It is not really necessary, since it declares that this memorial of the Passion is also the memorial of the Resurrection. Now, Christ's Resurrection is the cause and the beginning of our own resurrection

³⁶ See Dom L. Beauduin, "Le viatique," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 15.

³⁷ See Jean Daniélou, *Bible and liturgy*.

which is to take place at the end of the world (cf. I Cor. 15:20-26). For we are told that we are making a remembrance of the glorious Ascension and that "this Jesus . . . shall come in the same way as you have seen him going up to heaven" (Acts 1:11).

The Eucharist is a memorial, but it is not orientated wholly toward the past. It is also the leaven that is fermenting in the world for the realization of a new world. In addition to being the "mystery of faith" and the sacrament of charity, it is also the sacrament of hope.

(c) *The Supreme Sacrament*

To conclude, we can see how the Eucharist is the "supreme sacrament," or as it is commonly called, the "Blessed Sacrament."

Obviously the Eucharist surpasses the other sacraments in dignity, because it alone is accomplished in the very act of consecrating its matter; and also because it not merely contains Christ's grace in a transitory manner, but actually contains in a substantial and permanent manner Christ Himself in person, the author of grace.

But the Eucharist is the "Blessed Sacrament" above all because it contains the whole Christian mystery and the whole of Christian life: faith and charity, the Incarnation and the Passion, the Resurrection and the Ascension, the entire mystery of the Church and the final mystery of the Second Coming.

That is why the Eucharist is the sun around which the entire sacramental mystery gravitates. All the sacraments participate in its power and culminate in its celebration. Baptism and Confirmation inaugurate the Christian initiation that the Eucharist brings to completion. Penance restores to the "Christian communion" and admits once more to the Eucharist those who had been separated from it by sin. Extreme unction restores to the community those who had been isolated from it by sickness, and in case of death it prepares them for the supreme communion by a last purification. The sacrament of Holy Orders provides ministers both for the Eucharist and for the preaching of the Gospel that prepares the faithful to receive it. Finally, Matrimony expresses in its own way the same mystery, namely the union of Christ and His Church.

This enables us to answer a classical question of sacramental theology: Is the Eucharist necessary for salvation? It seems that it is, since Christ has explicitly declared: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood,

you shall not have life in you. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting" (Jn. 6:54-55). And yet the Church has always held that converts who die before Christian initiation or infants who die armed only with Baptism are saved.

The solution to this problem resides in the distinction between the sacrament of the Eucharist considered as a particular sacrament that has effect only because it is received, and the Eucharist considered as the supreme sacrament that contains all the others and is contained in them as the end is in the means, as charity is in all the virtues.

It is possible to be saved without visibly and sacramentally eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ. Nevertheless Christ's words are true: the Eucharist is necessary for salvation, inasmuch as no one can be saved without being incorporated into Christ and being a beneficiary of His Passion. In the case of adults, this is accomplished by faith and good will. In the case of small children, it is accomplished by Baptism which, being the sacrament of incorporation into Christ, inaugurates the Eucharist, grants admission to it, and in a certain respect contains it because it contains the *res sacramenti* of the Eucharist, its ultimate reality and the reason for its institution: union with Christ and with His Body (see *Summa*, IIIa, q. 73, a. 3).

The Eucharist, the supreme Sacrament, actually transcends the sacramental order. Those who are farthest removed, indeed most hostile to our faith, can save their souls without outwardly receiving the sacrament of the Body and the Blood. They cannot be saved without being enveloped, even without their knowing it, in the sacrament of the Presence and the Sacrifice, which is the sacrament of the Church, the sacrament of Unity, and, in a word, the sacrament of Love.

REFLECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Now that we have studied Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist individually, we shall treat them within a common framework in the next few pages. In this way we shall better reveal their relationships and the unity which they constitute as a group. Moreover, there are certain stages of the Christian life, such as the very first stage of initiation, when it is necessary to consider these three sacraments jointly. The initiation of unbaptized adults must prepare them for Baptism, but also for their Confirmation and First

Communion that are to follow. The initiation of baptized adults who have not received a Christian education and who are not instructed must prepare them for the ratification of their Baptism as well as for their First Communion. Likewise, the Christian initiation of children prepares them both for the ratification of their Baptism, for the renewal of their baptismal vows, and for their First Communion.

Lastly, we see that during the celebration of the Paschal mystery each year, the faithful renew, during the Easter Vigil, their profession of baptismal and Eucharistic faith in the Christ who died and rose again. In other words, it is in the same "mystery" that we are born in Baptism and that we are nourished in the Eucharist. That is why a single event like that of the Exodus can be considered at once the "type" of Baptism and the "type" of the Eucharist, even though proceeding from two different points of view and calling to mind different facts. The "Paschal mystery," which includes the celebration of both sacraments, likewise evokes the "types" of both. And this solemn manifestation of their unity gives us sufficient proof of the eminent place they occupy *together* among all the other sacraments, at the heart of Christian worship (see L. Bouyer, *The Paschal Mystery*).

1. THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, AND THE EUCHARIST

In recent years many studies of these relationships have been made (see articles by L. Bouyer in *Paroisse et liturgie*, 1950-1952, and the conclusion to them given in a remarkable conference at the priory of La Roseaie in Brussels. See also the substantial chapter by A.-G. Martimort, "La confirmation," in *Communion solennelle et profession de foi*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1952, pp. 159-201).

We shall see that the study of these relationships is important for pastoral theology. In the matter of Confirmation two extremes are to be avoided: the extreme of considering it merely as an integral part of Baptism; and the extreme of considering it as an independent sacrament without any relation to Baptism and producing its own grace without reference to baptismal grace. The first excess is an error pure and simple. It represents the Protestant tendency that repudiates all the sacraments except Baptism and the Eucharist. Father A.-G. Martimort has refuted this error by demonstrating the existence, throughout Tradition, of a special sacrament added

to Baptism and completing it. The other excess, which incorrectly interprets the ceremonies still in use in the Eastern Church—in which Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist are celebrated at one and the same time—leads pastors and preachers to ill-sounding and often heretical formulas. Thus, it is sometimes claimed that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” is not given at all in Baptism, but only in Confirmation.

The truth is that while Confirmation is a special sacrament, it deserves this name only because it is a confirmation of *baptism*. Baptism and Confirmation constitute two phases of the initiation to the Eucharist, just as the sacrament of Penance is a restoration of this initiation for those who have lost their right to it by sin.

But why this initiation in two stages? Relying on incontrovertible documents and with a very keen critical understanding of these problems, Father Bouyer has shown that the historical and theological reason for this fact must be sought in the “hierarchical” nature of every liturgy, including the liturgy of initiation (cf. Gr. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, London, 1945, Chapter 1, “Liturgy and Eucharistic Action”).

There is a hierarchy in sacred orders that corresponds to the various “ministries” of the Eucharistic celebration. By right the bishop presides. It is he who, by his words and actions, brings into being “the body of Christ,” understood in its twofold sense as sacrament and as Church. The priests are his collaborators; the deacons serve the priests; the faithful, whose prayer is led by the deacons, offer up and commune with the bishop in a single Eucharistic action.

Similarly, there is a hierarchy of functions in the initiation to the Eucharist. The first role belongs to the baptized laymen who present the candidate to the Church, vouch for his sound morality in the various “scrutinies,” and take responsibility for him in the person of one or two “respondents” who “sign” him, as is still done in the baptismal ceremonies for adults. The second role belongs to the deacon. It is the deacon who plunges the catechumen into the pool and imposes hands upon him. Then comes the turn of the priest who begins to anoint him with holy oil. Finally, the newly-baptized person is led to the bishop, who again imposes hands upon him and closes the ceremony by “confirming” the baptized person. And after that, everyone participates in the offering and in the Eucharistic banquet.

Inasmuch as the bishop is the head of the local Church, it is incumbent upon him to give the "seal" of baptism. The baptized person who has not as yet been presented to the bishop does not belong completely to "the House of God," or at least it has not yet been *sacramentally manifested* that he does. On the other hand, the baptized person who has been received by the bishop also has the fullness of ecclesial citizenship. He is a spiritually adult member of the Church, and together with all her other members He has taken on responsibility for her progress. And as a token of this, the bishop gives him not a "slap" but a caress that calls to mind the ancient salute, the accolade or kiss of peace, by which he paternally shows the baptized person that he belongs to God's "family," that he is a member of the holy nation, the chosen people, the royal priesthood, and that he has been invited to join everyone in the Eucharistic banquet. (It might be pointed out in passing that it is not fitting to give a "slap" while saying "Peace be with you." Here is a typical example of the stability of rites and the instability of explanatory formulas, as stated on p. 41 ff. above. Now that the reason for this rite is known with certainty, it is time to stop the false explanations of catechisms, missals, and pastoral catechesis, which still misinterpret it.)

This initiation rite which usually includes Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist at the same time is still current in the Eastern Church, but we rarely see it practiced in the Latin Church. This is a result of the circumstances that have brought about the multiplication of individual baptisms, especially of small children, on any day whatever and not only on certain specified days. The East and the West have reacted variously to this change of emphasis. As soon as baptisms became numerous and many persons were no longer baptized at the same time, the bishop could no longer preside over all baptisms.

Two solutions were possible: The unity of the Baptism, Chrismation-Confirmation, Eucharist ternary could be preserved by entrusting the powers of confirming to the priest. That is what the Eastern Church has done, in view of the fact that priests had always had the right to perform a first effusion of holy oil after the immersion and that they could also be considered as delegates of the head of the community. The following should also be noted:

Even though the sacrament of Confirmation is administered by the priest, the consecration of the *myron* (chrism) is properly an episcopal function. And

even in the Orthodox discipline, it is at present reserved to the heads of the autocephalic Churches. To receive chrism from an ecclesiastical authority is an act by which the supreme power of that authority is recognized. In parishes chrism is kept in the church, usually on the altar with the Holy Eucharist (E. Mercenier and F. Paris, *La prière des Églises de rite byzantin*, Chevetogne, 1937, pp. 324-325, 2nd ed.).

But the Latin Church chose the other solution, which consisted in putting off Confirmation and the Eucharist until a later date, when the bishop himself would preside over a collective ceremony. Actually, since the priest could celebrate the Eucharist himself, only the rite of Chrismation-Confirmation was reserved for the bishop. The first solution had the advantage of not interrupting the rite of initiation. The second had a greater advantage in the eyes of the West, inasmuch as immersion suffices to sacramentally signify incorporation into the death and Resurrection of Christ, which is the foundation of the Christian life. This advantage is that it does not deprive the faithful of being presented to the bishop, nor the bishop from knowing his sheep; and above all it places greater emphasis on the sacramental significance of this rite in which each one receives the fullness of Church citizenship and the loftiest gifts of the Spirit.

In a pertinent study of Pentecost, Father Lécuyer, C.S.Sp. ("Pentecôte et épiscopat," in *La Vie spirituelle*, May, 1952, pp. 451-466) remarks that Christian salvation frequently comes about in two stages both in the life of Christ and in the economy of His sacraments. From the birth of Jesus to His baptism in the Jordan, from the Pasch until Pentecost, from Baptism to Confirmation, from the priesthood to the episcopacy, we find the same progress being realized and the same mutual interrelationship.

There is no need for us to study here the effect of Confirmation, which we have already done in Chapter II above. Father Martimort (*op. cit.*) has developed this effect according to the four following aspects: the anointing of the prophets, the spirit of Pentecost, the fragrance of the Gospel, the strength of the martyrs. We merely want to answer a difficulty that concerns the interrelationships between Baptism and Confirmation. The question is this: Even though Confirmation does give the Spirit of Pentecost and confers entrance into the perfection of the Christian life, can we say that the baptized Christian does not yet possess the Holy Spirit and that the Christian life is not yet perfect in him?

We shall simply answer that in the measure that the rites of Confirmation are a special manifestation of these gifts, the rites of Baptism have not yet *expressed* these gifts. But Baptism cannot be looked upon as an isolated case and as a "term" without reference to Confirmation or to the Eucharist. Baptism in itself involves an "intention" to receive Confirmation, and an "intention" to receive the Eucharist. And in the measure that it is really an "intention" it brings to the baptized person the first-fruits of the graces of Confirmation and of the Eucharist. In short, the grace of Baptism germinally contains the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The fact remains that there is no real desire or intention that does not terminate in an act. There is the same relationship between Confirmation and Baptism as there is between Baptism of water and Baptism of desire, or between going to Confession and "intending" to go to Confession. Christ already acts through His sacrament in our "intention" to receive it. But the "intention" does not confer the character and the powers conferred by the sacrament. Only the person who has been baptized or confirmed in fact possesses the "powers" of Baptism and Confirmation and the rights to membership in the Church that they bring with them. All these remarks manifest the close bond uniting the three sacraments of Christian initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.

From this point of view, the renewal of baptismal vows should be bound up with Confirmation. There is a profound rightness in this that is both theological and pastoral. A child who freely and with full knowledge renewed his baptismal vows would no longer be a Christian "by proxy" so to speak. And hence he would receive the "seal" of his initiation. Thereupon he would be invited to officially enter into the communion of the faithful by solemn Eucharistic Communion. It would even be desirable that he receive Communion from the hands of the bishop who had just confirmed him.

It would be equally desirable that the "baptisms of adults" which are so numerous in large cities, become genuine and complete "initiations," including Confirmation and the Eucharist, and be presided over by the bishop in his cathedral. Pastoral guidance has everything to gain from the integral rediscovery and manifestation of the truth of these sacramental signs.

2. TYPOLOGY

Sacramental typology, that is, the study of the "types" of each of the sacraments in the Bible, is not an archaeological discipline. God's preparations are not meaningless, and we can never have a full understanding of what has been prepared unless we become students in the school of divine pedagogy. All the things that happened to the ancients in figures "were written for our correction" (I Cor. 10:11). We shall therefore recommend a few typological studies for each sacrament. (See J. Danielou, *Bible et liturgie*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1951, which is the key to all work on this subject.)

The reader will study in each case under what aspect the event or the sacrament of the Old Covenant is considered by Tradition as the type of the sacrament of the New Covenant. He will also try to rediscover in the Western and Eastern liturgies the "types" considered and the manner in which they are related to the sacrament. Lastly, he will draw pertinent conclusions from these "types" as to the past, present, and future significance of each sacrament.

(a) *The types of Baptism*

The first Creation; the waters of Creation; Paradise; Noah's Ark and the waters of the flood; the rainbow and the covenant; circumcision; the flight from Egypt; the passage over the Red Sea; Exodus; the waters of Mara; the waters of death, the kingdom of Leviathan (Is. 27:1; Job 40:20)—this "type" of the baptismal waters that make us die before giving us life is evoked particularly in the Coptic and Ethiopian liturgies. Josue and the crossing of the Jordan; the miracle of water in the Elias cycle (Alexandrian liturgy); the sacrifice of Elias; the bath of Naaman the Syrian, the institution of the Davidic kingdom; the building of the Temple; the Sabbath, the vigil and the figure of the "Eighth Day," etc.

Study the baptismal significance of the Psalms of the Passover (Ps. 21, 41, 44, 75, 113, 117) and the Psalms of Exodus (Ps. 77, 104). Also study from the typological point of view the various Biblical readings inserted in the liturgy of the Paschal Vigil. What connection does each of them have with Baptism?

In the New Testament, the types of Baptism can be studied especially in the accounts of the Baptism of John the Baptist, the Baptism of Christ, the conversation with Nicodemus, the talk with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, the cure of the paralytic at the

pool of Bethesda, the cure at Siloe of the man born blind, the episode of the lance thrust (Jn. 19:34) that caused water and blood to flow from Christ's side. It will be noted that St. John relates the washing of the feet not to Baptism, but to the Eucharist. And that is how Tradition has understood it. (On the "types" of Christian worship in St. John, the following work by O. Cullmann is recommended: *Les sacrements dans l'évangile johannique; la vie de Jesus et le culte de l'Eglise primitive*, Paris, Presses Univ. de France, 1951.)

In St. Paul's Epistles, a special study should be made of chapter five of Ephesians, which represents Baptism as a nuptial bath. Thus Baptism is also a mystery of Christ's marriage with the Church. This theme should be studied in Biblical and Church tradition, and in particular in the liturgy of the Epiphany, which is a baptismal feast in the Eastern Church. On this matter, read O. Casel's "Le bain nuptial de l'Eglise," in *Dieu vivant*, No. 4, pp. 43-49, which explains the relationship of three nuptial themes in the liturgy of Epiphany: Christ's Baptism, the adoration of the Magi who came to bring their gifts, and the marriage feast of Cana. Supplement this reading by Ch. Mohrmann's "Epiphania" in *Rev. des sc. phil. et théol.*, October, 1953, pp. 644-670.

On baptismal typology, the following should be read, in addition to the works already cited: J. Danielou, *Sacramentum futuri* (Paris, Beauchesne, 1950); Per Lundberg, *La typologie baptismale dans l'ancienne Eglise* (Uppsala, 1942).

(b) *The types of Confirmation*

Inasmuch as this sacrament is the "confirmation of Baptism," the types of Baptism are also to some extent the types of this second phase of initiation. However Christian Tradition has culled from the Bible certain characteristic and special types of Confirmation. These types are: The episode of the Spirit of God moving over the waters at the moment of Creation (Gen. 1:2), Jacob's blessing upon Ephraim and Manasses by the imposition of hands (see Tertullian, *De baptismo*, 8:1), the episode of the cloud after the departure from Egypt, the transmission of the Law on Mt. Sinai, the anointing of the prophets, the anointing of Christ by the Holy Spirit at the time of His Baptism, the cloud of the Transfiguration, Pentecost.

(c) *The types of the Eucharist*

Look up and study the different Biblical types of the Eucharist mentioned in the various Eucharistic liturgies, for example: "the offerings of Thy servant Abel the righteous, the sacrifice of our father Abraham, and that of Melchisedech" (anaphora of the Roman liturgy); "the gifts of Abel, the hosts of Noah, the holocausts of Abraham, the sacrifices of Moses and Aaron, the peace offerings of Samuel" (prayer of offering in the liturgy of St. Basil).

But the Biblical types of the Eucharist are mentioned elsewhere than in the liturgy. We find them in the Evangelists, especially in St. John (John 6:31-32; 48-49), and in the tradition of the Fathers. Study the following Eucharistic types: the manna in the desert, the meal of the Covenant, the meal of wisdom, the paschal meal, the rock of Horeb, the paschal lamb. (Concerning the role of the meal in the Bible, see J. Danielou, "Les repas de la Bible et leur signification," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 18, pp. 7-33). Show the Eucharistic signification of the Canticle of Canticles, and of the Psalms—Psalm 14, Psalm 42 (the *Judica me*, which the priest says at the beginning of Mass in the Roman liturgy), and Psalm 49, all three of which are Psalms of preparation; Psalms 22, 44, and 64, which are typically Eucharistic Psalms; and lastly Psalms 20, 33, 83, 138, etc., which are Psalms of thanksgiving.

Study the typological significance of the Sabbath in the Old Testament. The Eucharist is the New Covenant; show how the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the sitting at the right hand of the Father, the return of Christ are signified in the Eucharistic sacrament. Study the types of the Eucharist in the New Testament: the marriage feast of Cana, the purification of the Temple (Jn. 2:13-22; and cf. O. Cullmann, *op. cit.*), the multiplication of the loaves, the episode of the washing of the feet, the farewell discourse, the episode of the lance thrust and the blood of Christ that came out of His side (to be compared with the creation of woman from Adam's side), the parables of the guests invited to the wedding feast, the wise and the foolish virgins, the discourse on the bread of life, etc.

3. MYSTAGOGY

We have defined mystagogy (see *Theology Library*, Vol. I, p. 293) as "a catechesis that is not a lesson or an explanation, but a pedagogy or rather an initiation into the *mysteries*," i.e., an initia-

tion into sacramental rites. The mystagogue, that is, the pastor responsible for initiation into the sacraments, tries to give the catechumens or the faithful a spiritual understanding of the rite, not so much by giving them clear ideas on what happens as by giving them an understanding and a love of Christ whose action is made really present by the sacrament.

What differentiates mystagogy from a simple explanation is that Christ, into whose close friendship the sacrament introduces us, is not an idea but a Person, and a Person who is living right now. Today everyone admits the unfortunate results of catechisms that are too academic, too "intellectual." Hence mystagogy, or at least the mystagogic method, has once again become the order of the day. But it is not always rightly understood or correctly carried out.

Mystagogy cannot be improvised. It presupposes a thorough knowledge first of all of the economy of salvation throughout its course in history and in Biblical tradition, a knowledge of typology in the measure that the liturgy uses it, a knowledge of the origin and history of the different rites and of their meaning. It also calls for a profound understanding of souls and of their spiritual needs, which vary with age. Mystagogy is not an object lesson. It is a spiritual initiation given by means of words, starting from certain symbolic gestures and realities of the sacraments (see p. 107 ff. above).

The sacraments of Christian initiation present the whole Christian mystery to our faith, and we could cite a good portion of Patristic writings that relate to them. Such is not our present purpose. But we would still accomplish a useful work if we were merely to induce beginners to read Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*, and Tertullian's *Treatise on Baptism*, which are easily accessible today in translation and with excellent introductions.

But is it possible to do again today what the Fathers did so well in centuries past? What we must seek from them is a spirit and not a material model. (On this subject read the text of a stenotyped discussion published in *La messe et sa catéchèse*, Paris, 1947, pp. 73-85.) We shall therefore ask ourselves what can be done here and now with regard to each of the rites which concerns us.

A. The rites of Baptism

First, we must consider the context or the place, that is, the baptistery. Every one of us is born to the divine life at the baptismal font. How can Christians be expected to be proud of the divine life they have received or to see the splendor and grandeur of this life, when the site of their new birth appears to be nothing but a cluttered storeroom for broken chairs, a dirty corner full of dusty bits of cotton saturated with rancid oil, stale bread, and wastepaper?

When the Christian is reborn from on high, he is actually entering into the paradise that had been closed to him since Adam's sin and that was reopened to him by Christ's death and Resurrection. The baptistery must therefore be a place that symbolizes paradise. And first of all, it must be clean, bright, dignified, and of adequate size. It is not a toy, nor a place for child's play. It is symbolically the entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem, into the Body of Christ, into the bosom of the Father where Christ introduces the Christian. If a painting adorns it, this need not represent the baptismal font and the figure of a child being baptized. The Christian does not need to see pictures of what is effected before his eyes. Not only are such extras useless, but they might even lessen or take away from the sacred character of the ceremonies. It is a general law of the sacred that one cannot remain merely a spectator in its presence. All sacredness is lost upon a person who merely looks and does not participate.

A fresco or painting, however, can evoke what is signified in the sacrament. Thus, a certain baptistery in Ravenna presents a delightful profusion of flowers and fruits, birds and charming animals, that suggest the paradise into which the newly-baptized Christian is entering. Other baptisteries evoke the Baptism of Christ and the Spirit of God descending upon Him. In any case, the baptistery should be a "mystery" of beauty, grandeur, life, and joy, for it is into this mystery that the baptized person enters. "O Christian, recognize your dignity, you who have become a participant of the divine nature. . . . Remember the head and the body of which you are a member. Do not forget that you have been snatched from the power of darkness and transported into the light and the kingdom of God" (Pope St. Leo, First Sermon on the Lord's Nativity; Lesson for the Second Nocturn in the Roman Breviary).

What does the Christian see when he passes before the baptismal

font where he was born to the divine life? Is he reminded of his dignity as a Christian by the nobility of the place; of the "living water" that has sprung up within him since his Baptism into eternal life by the singing murmur of fresh, flowing water? Do flowers, lights, or some other sign of joy remind him of the happiness of heaven into which Baptism has already introduced him? On the contrary, is not the baptistery often a dark and dirty place, in perpetual disorder, and is not the baptismal water (when he can see it at all) stagnant and filled with impurities? And do not all these things make the Christian ashamed of this mother that brought him forth—or at least do they not force him to fight against an instinctive sense of shame?

It would seem that there is much to be done to restore the dignity of the place of Baptism. These are not simply esthetic preoccupations. If the sacraments and the sacramentals do "signify" something, it is not too much to ask that their symbols correspond insofar as possible to the truths that they are meant to signify. Obviously, all these things go hand in hand. The loss of the sense of Baptism corresponds to a certain indifference, nay, a certain contempt, for the place where the life of grace is communicated to man. And thence it is only a step to contempt for the disregarded reality that is given in this sacrament and that is none other than the divine life of the soul.

But the question of place is not the only one. It comes first only from the material point of view. Baptism might very well be administered outdoors, in the open air, and we must admit that this might often seem preferable. We must consider the symbolism of the baptismal rites in its totality. The task of the initiator—the mystagogue—is to see to it that these rites are as expressive as possible and that the catechumen's faith is guided in an orthodox and living way by the gestures and objects used. How can Christ act in the soul if, by some impossibility, faith has no place in it and if it is lulled to sleep, rather than awakened, by undecipherable rites?

The objection is sometimes raised that our rites no longer have any significance for modern minds. But that is not really the problem. As Father Bouyer points out, the problem is rather that rites no longer contain any symbols at all, at least not the way we often celebrate them. To quote him:

• We have unconsciously replaced symbols by a kind of abstract sign of the symbol, which has the same relationship to the symbol as the swallowing of a

pill has to the eating of a full meal. The authentic symbol is more expressive than any words, and that is why our Lord chose to join the symbol to the word in the economy of the means of grace, so that the symbol might say what no word can express. For the true symbol is a living act that seizes the whole man, body and soul, and makes him discover a truth by means of an action into which he is drawn with his flesh, his heart, and his mind. If this truth were expressed in words alone, it would remain an abstraction, but this way it is apprehended as a reality through a concrete act.

We, on the contrary, have been reduced to making vain attempts to restore some meaning to disembodied gestures deprived of all real life, by means of a flow of impotent words. The dessication and shrinkage to which the ancient baptismal rites have been subjected has resulted in their no longer being symbols in the strict sense, because they have retrogressed below the perceptible minimum at which they could still stir the living imagination. An abuse of the abstract distinctions of moral theology has led us to use as an ablution, anointing, vestments, etc., gestures or things that can still answer the definition given of them in the abstract, but which are now devoid of the power of suggestion proper to water that really washes, oil that strengthens the muscles, the fine festive suit that is worn on Sunday, etc. It is not so much the signification of the symbol that is dead in all these instances, as the symbol itself ("Le symbolisme des rites baptismaux," *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 32, pp. 6-7; cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 6-17).

Father Bouyer then makes an application of these principles by trying to confront "the experience of a man who receives on his forehead a few drops of water quickly wiped off, with the experience of a man who has taken a real bath." Indeed, it is undeniable that in the primitive Church Baptism was an immersion (and this is what its name signifies); and that it is still an immersion in the Eastern Churches, whether Orthodox or Catholic. (The translation of the prayers of the Byzantine rite are to be found in E. Mercenier and F. Paris. *La prière des Eglises du rite byzantin*, 2nd ed., Chevetogne, 1937: "L'initiation chrétienne," pp. 326-356.) Likewise, the anointing with oil, which is so difficult to understand in our own day, was originally an anointing of the whole body. This was no doubt the reason for the regulation which forbade the person who had been anointed from bathing after his Baptism for the whole period of Easter Week.

True, the rite of immersion both for children and adults is still provided for in the *Roman Ritual* as well as in the *Roman Pontifical*, and its practice for infants is relatively easy and seems to "speak" more eloquently than the other. However, it would be useless to try to reconstitute in their entirety ancient rites that are utterly lifeless today. "Purism" and "archaeologism" in the matter of the

liturgy are as much to be condemned as hasty, scamped work. To rediscover today the truth of sacred rites does not mean rediscovering it for ancient times. We can restore spiritual meaning to gestures, things, and words, only if they signify here and now the things to which our faith cleaves.

Let us therefore inquire into the elements of the ceremony and see to it that they are really representative—or symbolic—of what they signify.

The time of the ceremony. This can signify three things: the season of the year when Baptisms are celebrated; the duration of the ceremony; the number of ceremonies (or stages) necessary to complete the Baptism.

The season when baptism is celebrated. Here we must distinguish between the Baptisms of children and the Baptisms of adults.

The Baptisms of children. In the Latin Church, the rule of Canon 770, reproduced in the ritual, is that children should be baptized *quamprimum*: as soon as possible. This rule has a history. In ancient times, it was customary to baptize only during the Paschal Vigil or on the eve of Pentecost; and the popes constantly called this ancient rule to mind. Later on, Baptism was also conferred on Epiphany, then on other feasts. "Paschal baptism continued in Rome and in Italy longer than in the rest of the West. Even as late as the thirteenth century, the pope baptized children on Holy Saturday" (P.-M. Gy, "Quamprimum," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 32, p. 125).

In 1237, Cardinal Otto, the Apostolic Legate in England, reprimanded those—"diabolica fraude decepti"—who did not baptize on the two days provided for in the sacred canons, namely the vigils of Easter and Pentecost (cited by Gy, *art. laud.*, p. 126). Several factors encouraged the generalization of the *Quamprimum* about the time of the Council of Trent. First was the very high infant mortality and the dogmatic principle that Baptism is the only means of salvation. It was also a question of civil rights; for it was through Baptism that men entered into the life of a country as well as into the life of the Church.

Thus, "after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a declaration by Louis XIV demanded that all children be baptized within twenty-four hours after birth, except through episcopal dispensation (1698)" (*op. cit.* p. 127). This measure did not prevent the retaining of the prescription, which is still in effect today in the

ceremonial of bishops (Book II, ch. I, No. 15), according to which a child must not be baptized between the eve of Palm Sunday and Holy Saturday: "per octo dies ante in ipsa Ecclesia, nisi periculum immineat, nullus infans baptizetur." In France, infant mortality, which was forty percent in 1850, fell by 1950 to four and sixths. It was calculated that "by delaying the Baptism of children from the second Sunday of Lent until the Paschal Vigil, the demographic equivalent of the prescription of three centuries earlier for Holy Week would be obtained" (*op. cit.*, p. 126).

As to the fate of children who die without Baptism, is it permissible to believe that they can be saved "in the faith of their parents"? Cajetan had thought so, and although St. Pius V expurgated his opinion from his edition of the *Summa*, it was not condemned by the Council of Trent. On this subject, see the remarkable study of Ch. V. Hérès, "Le salut des enfants morts sans baptême," in *La Maison Dieu*, No. 10, pp. 90-105, which takes up Cajetan's opinion again.

The Baptism of adults poses fewer difficulties. It seems that there is every advantage in postponing this ceremony until a great feast such as Easter, Pentecost, or Epiphany. The whole of primitive Christian worship was encompassed in the framework formed by Baptism and the Eucharist. (See Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 26.) There is every advantage in reminding Christians, amid imposing baptismal solemnities, to what life they are born and in what life they must always live.

The duration and the stages. Here again we must distinguish between children and adults. With regard to children, Christian initiation in the Latin Church is given in three great stages: Baptism a few days after birth, Confirmation, the renewal of baptismal vows and solemn Communion. In France, the decrees of St. Pius X have been poorly followed (see on this subject, M. Gaucheron, *L'Eglise de France et la communion des enfants*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1952); to make up for this, a "private Communion" is often interpolated as an additional stage. It must be admitted that in this group of three—or four—ceremonies Baptism, often administered in haste and without ceremony, and Confirmation, that is no longer understood, have become poor and somewhat despised relatives. Baptism in particular has become purely individual and no longer concerns the Christian community. It might well be hoped that custom may restore to it an "institutional structure" (Gy, *op. cit.*, p. 126).

Disregard for the ceremony of Baptism has unfortunately extended to the Baptism of adults. The initiation that formerly took years is now completed in Christian countries within a few months. The first act of this initiation is Baptism, followed by Confirmation and the Eucharist, or more often by First Communion and then by Confirmation.

It should be noted that whereas Baptism was formerly administered together with Confirmation and the Eucharist at the end of the initiation, it has now become almost the first step. Until recent directives issued in the *Directory of the sacraments*, Baptism was conferred "in view of the marriage" of adult candidates who did not know much and gave very few guarantees of future perseverance. However, in mission lands, missionaries have rediscovered almost by instinct the ancient discipline of the "scrutinies," or at least something similar. The White Fathers demand four years of catechumenate and prepare their candidates by stages that terminate with the giving of a medal, the giving of a rosary, the giving of a very simple cross, and then with Baptism in the strict sense. It would seem profitable to follow the inspiration of the discipline of the "scrutinies," whose elements have been preserved for us in our Lenten liturgy and the liturgy of the Baptism of adults. Today many hope for this return to sound tradition. When this question was recently posed at the Center of Pastoral Liturgy, it received the following answer from Father Martimort:

1. It is true that the rites of Baptism have been historically elaborated in view of being graduated over a considerable period of time, since the entrance into the catechumenate could precede the scrutinies by several years and the scrutinies also extended throughout the Lent preceding Baptism. The blocking of the rites into a single ceremony was introduced on the occasion of Baptism *in extremis* (*Gelasian Sacramentary*, ed. Wilson, p. 110 ff.). As it happened, it was precisely this last-mentioned rite that became the rite now in use. It should also be noted that from the moment Baptism was administered only to children, the spreading out of the rites over a period of time no longer had any evident significance.

2. When missionaries found it necessary to re-establish the catechumenate for the adults they were evangelizing in pagan lands, liturgical tradition had been completely forgotten. It is too bad that at that moment they were led to create out of whole cloth non-liturgical ceremonies devoid of value for entrance into the catechumenate and as a preparation for Baptism.

3. At the present time, is it possible to spread out rites which we consider conformable to tradition and pastorally desirable? An element of an answer is given by two rubrics, the one in the missal for Holy Saturday (at the beginning of the First Prophecy), and the one for Baptism administered by a

bishop (the Ritual of 1952, Title II, Ch. 7, No. 5): the entire portion of Baptism that is celebrated in purple, the *catechizatio* (Roman Ritual for adults, Nos. 1-37a) must (on Holy Saturday) or *may* (when the bishop baptizes) be administered in advance by another priest.

4. To my knowledge, nowhere do the rubrics prescribe that outside of these two cases the ceremonies of Baptism must be celebrated without any interruption. The current practice is therefore purely a matter of custom. It is therefore timely to call to mind the excellent article by Father Noirot on the character and possibilities of an evolution of custom in liturgical law (*L'Année Canonique* I, 1952, pp. 129-140). Cf. also his article in *La Revue de Droit Canonique* II (1952), pp. 433-438. (Bull. de l'Association du C.P.L., April-June, 1953, p. 5.)

Baptism is not only the source of life for the baptized person's faith, but also the official and definitive seal of approval of the catechumen's faith.

Catechesis and the Catechism. The stages of Christian initiation are accompanied by an instruction that formerly was part of the rite of initiation, and was then known as "catechesis." Today this instruction has been increasingly separated from the rite of initiation, and superseded by the "catechism." Moreover this initiation was a preparation for Baptism in ancient times, whereas it is now thought of especially as a means of preparing children for their solemn First Communion. And the same catechism used by the children is presented to converted adults, even though it is not adapted to the needs of either. (Interesting notations will be found on this subject in the periodical *Catéchistes*, published by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. See in particular, No. 1, 1st quarter, 1952.)

The problems of Christian instruction and education are perhaps the most important ones of present-day pastoral guidance, and they have received much attention these last few years. The trouble is that they may perhaps have been studied for their own sake, without taking the totality of pastoral theology into consideration.

Regarding the training of children, the following works by Madame Fargues should be referred to:

Introduction des enfants de neuf ans au catéchisme (Paris, Desclée de Br., 3 vol., 1937).

Tests collectifs de catéchisme (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1951), an excellent work.

Le Bon Dieu et son enfant and *Le Bon Dieu aime ses enfants* (Paris, Ed. du Cerf).

Dieu aime les hommes (Tours, Mame).

La foi des petits enfants (Paris, Bloud et Gay).

To these should be added the works of Madame Fargues' disciples or teams, particularly the following:

Travail individualisé au catéchisme, by the Équipe Saint-Germain de Charonne (Paris, Presses d'Île-de-France).

Father Colomb, P.S.S., *Aux sources du catéchisme* (Paris, Desclée et Cie), a whole series of remarkable books.

Canon Quinet's *Pour un catéchisme efficace* (Lyons, Vitte).

Françoise Derkenne, *La vie et la joie au catéchisme*, several volumes for the teacher and student (Gigord).

The following are also recommended:

Mme. Lubienska de Lenval, *L'éducation du sens religieux* (Paris, Spes, 1946).

L. Rétif, *Catéchisme et mission ouvrière* (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1950), from the point of view of catechetical teaching in parishes.

A. Rétif, S.J., *Foi au Christ et mission* (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1953), especially suited to adults and gives, in the name of Revelation, the necessary content for sermons to converts in view of Baptism. This is a basic work.

A.-J. Maydiou, *To Be A Christian* (Chicago, Fides, 1958), also for adults.

Father Ch. Moeller, "Prédication et catéchèse" in *Irenikon*, Vol. 24, 3rd Quarter, 1951, pp. 313-343.

Godparents. The ritual demands that the person to be baptized have a godfather or a godmother, or both. The godfather and godmother seem to fill a basic twofold function. First, they are the representatives of the Christian community with regard to the catechumen, and they answer for him before the deacon, the priest, and finally the bishop. In primitive Christianity, it was upon the faith of their "respondents" that candidates were accepted among those to be baptized. Secondly, godparents play a liturgical role. Even today the ritual assigns several functions to them: for example, receiving the child from the hands of the priest and removing the child from the water when the Baptism is performed by immersion. And in the case of adult Baptism, the godparents must "sign" the catechumen three times.

Today Christian parents usually choose godfathers and godmothers in order to please a friend or a member of the family by establishing closer bonds with them. The authenticity of the rite would seem to make the godfather and godmother "respondents."

For example, godparents should not be willing to "answer" for a candidate who is being baptized "in order to get married" and "without believing." While this severity is a form of truth, it must also be a way of being merciful. Besides, it would be much more acceptable on the part of a layman than of a priest, whose severity might quite rightly appear to be a form of "clericalism" and shut the unbelieving candidate out of the Church for a long time.

While Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* does not yet mention godparents, it shows familiarity with the functions of "respondents." To quote from this work: "When those who are to receive Baptism have been chosen, their lives should be examined: have they led devout lives while they were catechumens? Have they honored widows, visited the sick, practiced all the good works? *If those who have brought them* bear witness that they have behaved in this way, let them hear the Gospel."

Baptismal Names. The child or candidate must have a baptismal name ready to present to the priest. There is an interesting study on the origins and choice of these names (God-bearing names, Biblical names, names of saints, etc.), as well as on the double name (Christian and family name, instituted from the sixteenth century onward in France by the civil authorities), by J. Quéme-neur, P.B., "Systèmes onomastiques français et arabes," in *Etudes sociales nord-africaines*, Cahier No. 25, July-September, 1952).

The Water. Before the celebration of the Baptisms in the strict sense, the ceremony of the Paschal Vigil includes the blessing of the water: a primordial rite, since water is the matter of the sacrament.

How can the significance of the water in Baptism be understood, and how can it be explained? The following aspects of the question can be studied profitably:

The significance of water in the Bible (see "Typology" above, p. 248 ff.): F.-M. Braun, "L'eau et l'esprit," in *Revue thomiste*, p. 5-20, and the suggested bibliography.

The significance and value of water in nature, and according to the natural uses which man makes of it.

The significance of water in the ancient cosmologies (see Per Lundberg, *op. cit.*; F. Cumont, *Lux perpetua*), in which water represents the empire of the Dragon, the Leviathan, and death. Also the significance of water in modern cosmology.

The significance of water in the history of religions (Mircea

Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1958, Ch. 5, on water symbolism.

Special study should obviously be made of whatever the Bible has preserved and retained of this ancient religious symbolism.

The significance of water according to the ancient liturgies of Baptism (see Tertullian, *Treatise on Baptism*, III: "Water in the Creation of the World," and IV: "Water and the spirit").

The significance of water in the ancient psychology of the baptized person (the drama and obligation of the one who entered the water; the value of ancient comparisons between Baptism of water and of blood).

The significance of water in the psychology of depths (see the very interesting notations of L. Beirnaert, S.J., "The Mythic Dimension in Christian Sacramentalism," in *Cross Currents*, No. 5, Fall, 1951. These are a few useful studies that could be made, but they are only the preliminaries of pastoral theology in the strict sense, whose task it is to introduce minds into the "mystery" of Baptism here and now.

Exorcisms. The exorcisms of Baptism are one of the most delicate rites to explain. In fact, pastors are usually glad that they have to say them in Latin and studiously avoid explanations. In a time when belief in astrology, superstitions, credulity in all sorts of fables, run rampant in minds eager to find remedies wherever they can against fear or dread of the future, belief in the devil is out of style in Christian circles, even among the clergy.

It is true that the rites of exorcism (of catechumens, of churches, at the time of dedication, and of other places), the rites of blessing houses and many others in the ritual (the use of holy water, etc.), have sometimes been retrieved by the Church from ancient non-Christian rites. And it has sometimes taken quite a long time for the Church to "baptize"—i.e., to give a new meaning—to these ancient rites (see, on this subject, what we were saying concerning the law of the stability of rites, p. 41 ff. above). We cannot develop this proposition here, but shall merely give an example of what we mean.

Hippolytus' *Tradition* makes the following prescription: "At the crowing of the cock, the catechumens are to approach the waters, which are to be pure and flowing." Now, according to the symbolism of the sacred books of Zoroastrianism, the cock was on the one hand "the kind fowl that wrests men from the lazy indolence

and torpor of sleep, and calls them to morning prayer and work"; and on the other hand "the light-greeting bird whose song heralding the coming of day puts to flight the devils that haunt the surface of the earth during the darkness of night, and drives them back to their infernal abysses" (F. Cumont, *Lux perpetua*, *op. cit.*, p. 409).

When the "Persian bird" became acclimated in Greece, the religious ideas attached to him were likewise propagated, and the two themes developed in the Avesta and the Pahlavi books were "still discussed by Christian writers of the fourth century and were mentioned in the hymns to be sung at dawn" (*ibid.*, p. 409). F. Cumont cites in support of this thesis certain hymns by St. Ambrose (*Aeterne rerum conditor*), by Prudentius, and by St. Gregory. Minds still imbued with paganism sometimes wove superstitious beliefs into the liturgical use of "the song of the cock." We know that in the eleventh century faith in the power of the cock to put the spirits of darkness to flight was still very strong, and Burchard of Worms condemned this superstition (Text cited in Cumont, p. 410). However, this superstition continued to be transmitted from one generation to the next down to Shakespeare, who put it to use in the first scene of *Hamlet*.

Belief in "demons," genii, spirits, and "shadows" (Εἶδωλα), etc., was very widespread in the first centuries of our era, and these beliefs were more deeply rooted in men's minds because this world seemed to be a "hostile world." Men were afraid of the sea and the sky, wind and storms, because they were still unable to explain them. And there were never too many genii to conciliate the good graces of these cosmic "forces."

For a Christian, there are only angels and devils apart from God, but the early Christians conceived of devils in a way that was very similar to the way the pagans conceived of evil spirits. It was naturally a great temptation, especially in view of the persistence of certain *rites* against "the spirits of darkness" to fall back into the old *beliefs* on darkness, light, and the mythology that accompanied them. Hence the Church has had to insist in season and out of season, and to multiply her exorcisms in order to wipe out the last vestiges of paganism.

Hippolytus' *Tradition*, to cite only one source, teaches that if a catechumen "is a sculptor or painter, he is to be taught not to make idols, and that if he refuses to stop he is to be sent away. . . .

If he is a priest of idols or the guardian of idols, he must cease or be sent away." And when the moment of Baptism comes, women are asked "to untie their hair and to set aside their golden jewelry," to make sure that no one enters the baptismal bath holding on to some idol. The hunt for idols was to continue for centuries, and it is still going on. In a country like Mexico, where there are only Christians (or atheists) officially, fresh offerings can still be seen on the altars of the ancient Aztec gods (see J. Soustelle, "Respects aux dieux morts," in *Cahiers de la compagnie M. Renaud, Jean-Louis Barrault*, No. 1).

Without going that far, we know that there are superstitions that still carry weight: for example, knocking on wood, walking under a ladder, the number 13, etc. The number of clairvoyants and fortune-tellers, the astrological chronicles that appear in almost every newspaper, are significant. Indeed, it does not suffice to remind Christians that the devil exists. That is necessary (see C. S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*, a shrewd analysis of the devil's tactics in our modern times), but it is not enough. Actually, exorcisms can be made very practical by reminding Christians of all the helps they seek outside the true God and His Son Jesus Christ, by showing them all the fears they experience outside the fear of offending God. The rites of exorcism should place catechumens on their guard against those false helps or fears, and Baptism gives them the grace to overcome these anxieties.

The Profession of Faith. Before the catechumens are baptized, they are asked to make their profession of faith. They then recite the Apostles' Creed.

Formerly, the renunciation of Satan and the profession of faith were made facing toward the West and the East respectively. (This is still the practice in certain rites, including the Byzantine.) What is the significance of these different orientations in antiquity and today? Is the symbol of the direction in which the sun sets still meaningful today? Can it be, and if so how?

The Apostles' Creed (see Father Nautin, *Je crois à l'Esprit-Saint*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1947; see also *Lumière et vie*, No. 2: "Le symbole des Apôtres"). It seems that the origins of the Apostles' Creed are bound up with the baptismal ceremony, and that it was said in three parts before the three immersions. It was a very distinct profession of faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The present rite no longer makes provision for this tripartite division.

However it is possible and desirable to make of this "recitation" a veritable public "act of faith," in which the catechumen alone expresses himself, everyone else present being merely witnesses to his faith. Evidently, in the case of infant Baptism, it is up to the godparents to make the profession of faith since they are the child's respondents. It is also permissible for the priest to interrogate the one or more persons being baptized. In the celebration of a group Baptism, as was the case in the primitive Church, this might be an occasion for the general instruction of the community. The questions that the bishop sometimes asks during a confirmation ceremony benefit all present.

Secondary Rites. Before the immersion or infusion of water, the baptismal ceremony includes diverse rites mixed in with those we have just mentioned: the insufflation (the rite of exorcism), the imposition of salt on the lips, of saliva on the ears and nostrils, the imposition of the hands, the imposition of the stole, the anointing with holy oil, the signations. We cannot analyze all these rites in detail, and any reflections we might propose would be analogous to those we have already made. Concerning the *breathing* upon the baptized person, cf. Gen. 2:7; Job 32:8; 33:4; Zach. 12:1; etc. Breath is the symbol of life, victorious over death and over the prince of death.

On the role and significance of the *salt*, ordinarily so poorly understood, read H.-I. Marrou's commentary on Diognetus, *A Diognete*, (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1951, pp. 146-176). Salt is the symbol of the priestly function of Christians who must "preserve the world" by a joint action on their part. To quote Deacon Timothy of Alexandria (cited by Marrou, p. 168), "it is because of them that the world holds together, and it is because of their intercession that human life holds together and acquires value in God's eyes." If the salt loses its savor, then the whole world becomes corrupted. To taste salt is to taste that which gives life to the world, or at least what maintains life in the world.

But salt also expresses something else. It evokes a covenant, a friendship, a pact. The expression "covenant of salt" (Num. 18:19; cf. Lev. 2:13) was frequently used by the nomads, and specifically by the Hebrews. The catechumen who received the salt had concluded a covenant with Christ. This preliminary ceremony of Bap-

tism placed him under obligation during the entire period of his initiation. Salt is the first food of life given to the one who is invited to the Eucharistic feast but who cannot as yet participate in it.

The imposition of the saliva is a manifest reminder of Mark 7:33.

On the imposition of the hands, cf. Acts 6:6; 8:17 (in which we see the origins of confirmation); Acts 13:3; I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6; and in the Old Testament Num. 27:16-23; Deut. 34:9. The rite of the imposition of hands is a gesture of authority that can have diverse spiritual meanings, depending on the case and the circumstance. The same is true of the imposition of the stole.

Oil. In the Latin liturgy, oil is used under three forms: the oil of the catechumens, the holy chrism, the oil of the sick. The first two are used for Baptism, the second for Confirmation, and the third for the anointing of the sick. In the Bible, oil is a remedy and serves to heal. It is a food, a fortifier. When it is used in massage, it can also symbolize fortitude. Lastly, it is a symbol of the Spirit of God for those—kings, priests, or prophets—who are anointed with it.

The first anointing in Baptism seems to signify the fortitude with which the candidate, in union with Christ and through Him, will confront Christ's enemy, Satan. The second unction, made with holy chrism, admits the baptized person into God's people, which is a priestly, prophetic, and royal people. To be anointed with this oil and to be anointed with the Spirit of Christ are two synonymous formulas. We shall speak again of the priesthood of baptized Christians when we discuss the ministerial priesthood. In connection with all these rites, we shall study the diverse uses made of oil in the Bible, the immediate significance that flows from these uses, and the significance that can be attributed even today to this natural "fruit" of the olive.

Signations. In Baptism there are many signations, especially in the baptism of adults. We might compare the signation of the five senses in Baptism with the formula of anointing the five senses in the sacrament of Extreme Unction. The baptismal formula is as follows: "I sign your forehead so that you may bear the cross of Christ without shame; I sign your ears so that you may hear the divine precepts; I sign your eyes so that you may see the light of God; I sign your nostrils so that you may smell the good odor of

Christ; I sign your mouth so that you may speak the words of Christ; I sign your breast so that you may believe in God; I sign your shoulders so that you may bear the yoke of the Lord's service; I sign your whole person in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit so that you may have eternal life and live forever. Amen." The rite of signation speaks for itself each time. It is unfortunate that the signation of the five senses, which is so beautiful and testifies that our whole body is also baptized and has received the promise of resurrection, is no longer practiced. In order "to save time," the ritual for the "Baptism of adults" is hardly ever performed. Modern missals no longer even carry the formula.

After the immersion or the infusion of water, three other rites are performed: the anointing with the holy chrism, the imposition of the white garment, and the handing over of the blessed candle.

The imposition of the white garment is a beautiful symbolic act. The man who has taken the baptismal bath is a new man. He does not put on his old clothes again, but puts on the livery of Christ, the white garment of the Resurrection, the one that the angels wore near the empty tomb. Formerly the garment also covered the head, to protect the holy chrism, and the neophytes wore it during the entire week of the "white garments." For women, in addition, a white veil is a nuptial symbol. It evokes the wedding feast between the Church and Christ, in which every baptized person takes part by reason of his Baptism.

The giving of the candle immediately afterwards is an allusion to the definitive meeting with Christ which is promised to the baptized person if he remains faithful until the Bridegroom returns. It is regrettable that these two rites, especially the rite of the garment, are usually sadly neglected. Often a soiled and rumpled hand towel is used to signify the white garment. But there is an excuse for that. We do not put on clean linen and new garments when we have not washed ourselves completely. The rite of infusion has caused the rite of imposing the garment to lose much of its significance.

The Essential Rite of Baptism. We have already spoken of the symbolism of the water, and we do not need to discuss it any further. But Baptism consists not of water, but of a bath or infusion of water accompanied by the formula.

St. Paul saw Baptism as an immersion in the death of Christ

and an immersion in the Resurrection. Water is therefore the symbol of a tomb, and more precisely of Christ's tomb. This symbolism was easy for a civilization in which cosmic water (the ocean, the seas) was regarded as the kingdom of death (see on this subject Chapter VIII, *Theology Library*, Vol. V, on "The Return of Christ," and the book by Per Lundberg cited above). Water is also the symbol of life. For the ancients, all life began in water; water was the begetter of life. The Christian, born in water, was a fish, and Christ, our eldest brother, was also represented as a large fish, "Ἰχθυσ."

What can and does remain of this symbolism today? There are some who wonder about this with a degree of desperation: "The present liturgical rite of the Latin Church no longer has any of the meaningful solemnity of the bath of death and resurrection. It does not even remind us of washing with water. It has become the symbol of a symbol . . ." (Yvan Daniel, "Le baptême, entrée dans le peuple de Dieu," in *Masses ouvrières*, February, 1953, p. 71). It is certain that our rites express imperfectly the mystery of death and resurrection of which St. Paul speaks. However it is not at all sure that the ancient rites would express it any better today.

It does seem possible to reintroduce Baptism by immersion for infants, since that has been done here and there in recent times. But it seems unfeasible and undesirable, in view of our modern mentality, to practice such a Baptism for adults. Those who accuse the presently constituted sacrament of being "a travesty" would probably discover a different travesty in such an immersion, but a travesty none the less. Regardless of how obscure the symbols at our disposal may be, we must make use of them. It is up to the pastor to introduce believers into the mystery of faith that is unfolding invisibly under the veil of the rites. And he should do it without giving a history lesson or an object lesson, and without unduly multiplying "explanations" that distract from prayer and often give the faithful the impression that they are being treated like babies.

The formula that accompanies the baptismal gesture and that we call the "form" of Baptism raises several questions for historians and theologians. Father Philippeau, referring to the customs of the primitive Church (first and third centuries) writes: "Baptism is conferred by immersion or ablution without any other formula than the profession of faith of the recipient preliminary to the immersion

or ablution. In other instances, only the name of the Lord Jesus is pronounced" (*Quaest. lit. et par.*, March-April, 1953, *op. cit.*, p. 68).

How can these facts be reconciled with the sacramental theory that requires the minister to pronounce the formula himself? As we see it, they are to be interpreted as a function of the law of the stability of rites, of which we have already spoken. And they oblige us to recognize, beyond or around the absolutely stable and constitutive nucleus of the sacrament, a certain amount of free play, varying with epochs, places, and interventions by the Magisterium.

In certain liturgies Baptism is still accompanied by other rites, whether primitive or not, that seek to express in a more tangible way even than the anointings, the "character" that Baptism confers and the "mark" of total belonging to Christ and to His Spirit signified by the σφραγίς (that we translate by the word "character"). The Jacobites and the Abyssinians "impress a cross on the forehead or the arm of the child with a hot iron, the former before Baptism and the latter, afterward. Syrian Catholics bear these marks even today, but if I saw them aright, they were tattooed with a needle and not made with a hot iron. In both cases this tattooing is, as is true of the primitives and the Hindu Ramanujas, the mark of belonging to the god. This tradition is an ancient one among pagans . . ." (F. Cumont, *Lux perpetua*, p. 424). The traditional ritual language has simply been appropriated by Christianity when it wanted to express something analogous: namely, total belonging to God.

But Christianity's spiritual conception of its mysteries gradually influenced the evolution of rites. Thus Christian rites were slowly emancipated not from all material aspects—for that would amount to their annihilation—but from all gross and useless elements and from all that distracts the mind from what is spiritually signified. Sacraments are not an alibi for salvation. To give only one example that does not concern the sacraments, Bérulle refused to grant the French Carmelite nuns the permission to chain themselves, after the example of certain Spanish confraternities. Citing St. Gregory, he answered: "Si servus Dei es, non teneat te haec catena fabri sed catena Christi" (cited by Cumont, *op. cit.*, p. 424).

This shows us that the "mystagogue" priest, while leading souls by the path of symbols, must also beware of all symbols that are not immediately "transparent," and that do not lead the soul to

the spiritual reality they represent, but make it stop at the "thing" that the symbol is itself. Thence comes the temptation to superstition, whose characteristic is to foolishly stop at a thing, a gesture, or a rite, without any effort at spiritual comprehension. Rites must therefore be simple and forthright symbols that "speak" to every believer. They lose their "transparency" on the one hand when they are unduly weighed down with gestures and formulas that choke the spirit and do not leave it free to go where it should be led; and on the other hand when they are diluted to the point of becoming the symbol of the real symbol.

B. The rites of Confirmation

The essential rites of Confirmation are the imposition of hands (cf. Acts 8:17), and the anointing with holy chrism.

In the Byzantine rite, it is the rite of anointing that is most prominent. As we have already said, in this rite Confirmation is conferred by the priest immediately after Baptism; the priest anoints the baptized person on the forehead, the eyes, the nostrils, the mouth, the ears, the chest, the hands, and the feet, saying: "Seal of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Then the priest goes all the way around the baptistery with the godfather and the child, solemnly singing several verses, certain passages from an Epistle and Gospel, and a litany.

We shall not insist upon the significance of these rites, since we have already discussed them in relation to Baptism. We have also considered the relationship between Confirmation and Baptism.

C. The Rites of the Eucharist

Paradoxical as it may be, present-day Christians are given a more thorough "initiation" into the Eucharist than into Baptism. They have access to excellent "missals" that our ancestors did not have and that generally give them all the explanations they could wish, should the pastor neglect to lead them to God explicitly by means of the rites he accomplishes in Christ's name. Hence we shall discuss this sacrament more briefly. With regard to the details of each rite, we refer our readers to our bibliography, and especially to J.-A. Jungmann, *Missarum Solemnia*, 2 vols. (New York, Benziger, 1951-1955); Noël Maurice Denis and Robert Boulet, *Eucharistie* (Paris, Letouzey, 1953; B. Botte and C. Mohrmann, *L'Ordinaire de la messe*, annotated text, translation, and studies (Paris, Ed. du

Cerf, 1953). The last-mentioned work contains a brief and simple "History of the prayers of the Ordinary of the Mass." It is valuable for a study of the texts, but it does not discuss the rites.

We shall therefore limit ourselves to a few *reflections* on "First Communion," that is, on the Eucharist considered as the term of Christian initiation. We shall also make a few reflections on the subsequent reception of Communion.

1. *First Communion*

Preparation. It belongs to the family, and to the priest simultaneously and complementarily, to prepare the child to receive his First Communion. A priest has very little influence over a child without the family's cooperation, and he has still less influence when the family is against him. The child belongs first of all to the family, and it is the family's responsibility to educate and instruct him. And yet the family cannot do without the priest's help in the matter of the religious education of children.

Many families are hardly "Christian" today and are incapable of instructing their children. Thus the burden of the entire religious education falls increasingly upon the priest. And he in turn must seek the aid of catechists.

A very praiseworthy institution has sprung up in certain dioceses, namely, the "Mother-Catechists." According to this plan, mothers receive a group of children in their own homes once a week, instructing these children in preparation for First Holy Communion, along with their own children. Thus the principle of education by the family is rediscovered at least for one member of each group, and the other families are stimulated by this example and learn to know one another. Moreover, children less favored by the Christian life of their parents receive precious help from this friendly family and from their contact with this "mother-catechist." Experience also tends to show that poor and humble families are more easily won over to this experiment.

In any event, the priest must take the greatest care in the training of his catechists. It would be paradoxical to ask for diplomas for nurses or social service workers, and not ask anything of those who are to nurture the spiritual life of children. Just because a person has nothing else to do or does not have the time to prepare herself to render other services is no sign that she has sufficient aptitudes to become a catechist.

The child's preparation ordinarily terminates with an examination. But the examination is only a partial sign of the child's religious aptitudes. The pastor and the family must also consider his piety and habits.

With regard to the religious "knowledge" necessary for the Christian initiation of the child, two things are to be considered: on the one hand, what is necessary for Christian initiation; and on the other, what is fitting to the age of the child who is making his First Communion.

There are various degrees in the presentation of the truths of Christianity, and everything cannot be taught at the same time: "The initial announcement that opens up the subject and leads to faith, to unconditional adherence to Christ, is the 'kerygma' (e.g., St. Peter's discourse on Pentecost). The announcement of the 'kerygma', the essential message of faith—namely, the fact of the death and Resurrection of Jesus—and the hearing of this message correspond to what is necessary for Baptism. Then comes the elementary doctrine of this Christ, and that is the catechesis or *didaché* (e.g., certain catecheses of St. Cyril of Jerusalem). And finally comes the advanced teaching of religion that utilizes more subtle argumentation and Scripture, and is known as the *didascalía* (e.g., certain homilies of Origen and St. Bernard; cf. Heb. 6:1-2)" (A Rétif, *Foi au Christ et mission*, pp. 21-22).

There are degrees to be respected with regard to what is to be announced to pagans, told to converts, or taught to practicing persons. Christian initiation, even for adults, must not be a summing up of the entire "theological *summa*," a sort of theology dispensed in "pills," but a veritable initiation by degrees into the doctrine of faith. The error of certain catechisms is that they are a "summary" of "the whole" doctrine, incomprehensible to the uninitiated, and a fortiori to children. Catechumens are taught questions concerning the morals of marriage or of taxes when they do not yet know the first word of the Sermon on the Mount, and when they are totally ignorant of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul.

If the presentation of Christian truth involves these degrees, according to the stage of conversion that has been reached, it also involves degrees according to the child's chronological age. The child's faith is not yet the faith of the adolescent, and the adolescent's is not yet the faith of the adult. There are profound transformations, that are sometimes painful but normally beneficial, from

Nothing is more variable than the Christian altar, depending on the epoch and the rites within which it is considered.

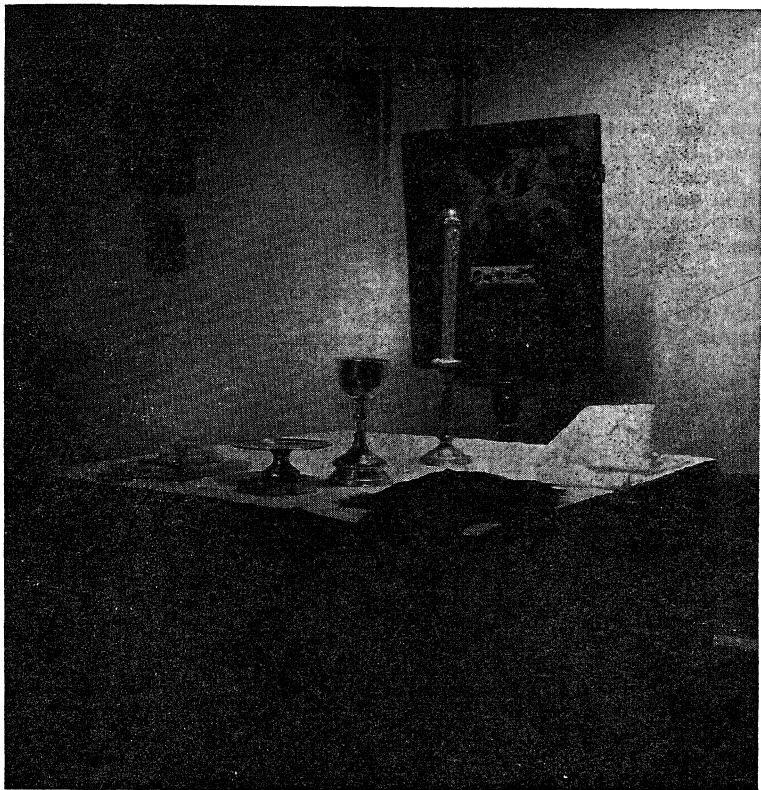
We know that the first Christians were loath to speak of altars. In their supreme concern to stress the spiritual character of the new worship, in contrast to paganism, they liked to say that Christians had neither temples nor altars (cf. Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, c. 32, 1; Tertullian, *De spect.*, c. 13). The table on which offerings were deposited had only a utilitarian value. It was a wooden table set up each time by the deacons. The center of the assembly was not this table, but the bishop himself.

It was not until the fourth century that stone altars were erected. But these altars were only tables. They are still called tables—"ἡ ἁγία τράπεζα"—in the East. Until the twelfth century, the altar was to remain, even in the West, of very modest dimensions (scarcely more than a yard square).

We know what evolution the altar has since undergone. First it was moved from the center of the assembly toward the back wall, and then it was increased in size, at least in the Latin Church, chiefly under the influence of Baroque art.

This very simple altar (illustration on facing page) is prepared for a Catholic Mass according to the Byzantine rite. It has preserved from its origins its modest form, the absence of any crucifix (which was introduced in the Latin Church in the eleventh century), and also the use of a single candle. The disposition of the breads will be seen to the left.

The isolation of this altar gives us the feeling of a "separated" place where the priest, as another Christ, goes mysteriously to meet the Father, to offer Him the sacrifice of all men and to receive His gifts. And yet this withdrawal of the altar into the background, which is emphasized by the iconostasis and the presence of the ikons provides signs of an evolution in which the East has taken delight and which represents only one of several traditions.



one stage of development to the next. It is up to the pastor to know these stages and if need be to facilitate them (on this subject, see A. Liégé, "Faith," in *Theology Library*, Vol. IV).

Finally the liturgical preparations of the child demands something different from a purely intellectual instruction. The liturgy shows us in this regard how "human" the Church is, and how she embraces the various resources which a sound pedagogy must use to educate the whole man. The importance of singing, hymns, music, the dance, of the personal activity of the children, etc. should be stressed. The fact that all the religions use the art of dancing, not in an artificial and secondary way, but quite naturally and on all occasions, should not leave the pastor indifferent. (For a discussion of the importance of gestures and bowing, see Lubienska de Lenval, *op. cit.*)

Ceremonies. First Communion ceremonies should correspond to what they signify. An initiation is not an end but a point of departure. The rite that in a certain respect consecrates the initiation must not be experienced as the termination of a religious life but as its beginning. That is true for the Baptism of adults (and for their Confirmation and First Communion). It is equally true for the ceremonies of the renewal of baptismal vows, the Confirmations, and First Communions of children. The trouble is that often the catechumen who has been coddled and sustained throughout his initiation, has the impression that after his Baptism he has been "let down." Actually, it is up to the communion of the faithful, and under normal conditions that is the parish, to receive him and give him its fraternal support. But the parish does not always show much concern about him. And what is true of the adult catechumen is also true of the child of an indifferent family who has just made his First Holy Communion. At this juncture at least, the Church should be able to count on the child's "respondents" (godparents).

With regard to the rites, the priest will strive to remind the parents of the "rites" that impress upon the child the importance of this "departure," and of everything connected with it. In certain "missionary" parishes the priests propose to the parents themselves a rite of promise before their child's First Communion, so that they may fully realize their responsibilities. It would be very desirable, as we have just said, for the godparents to be present at the Mass that consecrates the child's initiation.

The dresses and suits worn for First Communion should be sim-

ple and modest, and call to mind the white garments of Baptism. Children must not be allowed to express distinctions in class or wealth on that day (see James 2:1-4). In this, the priest's role must be complementary to that of the families, for before him as before Christ all children are equal and no social differences may be recognized. We must add that the First Communion of children is even more a family feast than a parish feast. The priest must also watch that certain families do not profane this feast, but that they all celebrate it with their children in a Christian manner.

The date for First Communions is often chosen without any liturgical concern. However there is every advantage in laying great emphasis on the bond between this ceremony and Baptism, a bond that is likewise manifested by the renewal of baptismal vows and the carrying of the "baptismal" candle. Feasts such as Easter and Pentecost and all the days of the Paschal season are well suited to this purpose.

2. *The Eucharist, the Renewal of the Pasch*

The Christian is never really completely "initiated" in his soul and mind. Born to Baptism once for all, and having received the ratification of his Baptism, he constantly needs the efficacious help of the Passion and Resurrection of his Savior. Born once through a sacrament of the Pasch, he continues to need a sacrament of the Pasch. It is by the Pasch that he lives. It is from sacrament to sacrament (of this Pasch) that he must go until he one day attains the eternal Pasch of the risen Christ in heaven. While the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation cannot be renewed, the Eucharist, which can be renewed, permits each Christian to rediscover again and again the unique mystery of the three sacraments of his initiation, and of the wellspring of life in which Christ has begotten him and through which He wills to refresh him until eternal life.

The Eucharist, as a sacrament of initiation, permits the initiate to continue to renew his initiation until death, or at least to perfect and complete it until he has become perfectly assimilated to Christ who died and rose again. Our reflections on rites will now concern the Eucharist as this renewal of the Pasch.

The Eucharist is the "thanksgiving" of Christ and of His Church to the Father. We shall first consider the central location of the Eucharistic cult: *the altar*. Then we shall consider the Christian assembly that gives thanks around the altar.

(a) *The altar*

The ancients connected the word altar (*altare*) to *altus* (high). Originally, the altar was a high place. In the majority of primitive cosmogonies, the gods reigned on the heights, above the various "heavens." Olympus, where Zeus reigned, was above everything else. Thus the higher man could rise, the closer he would be to the gods. We now know that the ziggurats, among which is the Tower of Babel, reproduced the universe symbolically, but in the mind of their builders they also effectively reproduced the universe. At the top of the tower man met the god who sat upon the heights, and the altar was also there. The tower brought man close to his god and permitted the god to descend more easily to earth. The same conception was to make of every height, every mountain, a sacred place.

The altar is therefore a place or a table of communication between man and his God. Man ascends it, as Moses did Sinai, and meets his God there. He brings presents, as an homage of his subjection. He places them on the altar and thus makes them "sacred things" which he can no longer touch as if they belonged to him. God for His part gives man His favors and His laws.

Where is the Christian altar? "Neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem" (Jn. 4:21). At the Last Supper our Savior offered up His body and blood on the table of the paschal meal, amid His disciples. And yet that table is not our altar in the strict sense. The first generations of Christians were so little concerned about having "altars" that they contrasted themselves with other religions by claiming they had no altars (cf. Minicius Felix, *Octavius*, 32). That is how they sought to distinguish themselves from all the other religions.

Before placing the altar at the center of the Christian assembly, the first communities had placed the bishop's chair in the center. They did not want the faithful to believe that men approached God by ascending the altar corporeally, or that God is a physically elevated being who approaches man by descending materially from His dwelling. They wanted it clearly understood that it is through faith that we approach God, and that it is by giving us His grace that God makes Himself present to us.

The first generations of Christians said that Christ Himself is our "altar," the One in whom we spiritually make contact with God

and by whom God communicates His favors to us. This was to be the real meaning of our Christian altar. It is not a specific *high-place* "made by hands" (Heb. 9:24), where man meets God physically so to speak and where God descends materially. On the contrary it is the symbol, that can be set up in every place, of a Person who is Christ.

We say that we have no altar, in the sense that our altar is not visible. Our altar is Christ, who by His Passion and Resurrection gives us access to God. It is toward Him and Him alone that we must ascend, or as least proceed spiritually, in order to meet the Father and to give Him thanks for all His gifts. And it is Christ who communicates the Father's favors to us. Our real altar is in heaven, where Christ is. That is why we beseech God during Mass: "Almighty God, bid these offerings be carried by the hands of Thy holy angel to Thine altar on high in the sight of Thy divine majesty" (Canon of the Mass, *Supplices te rogamus* . . .).

When we say that we have altars here below, it is in the sense that our altars are symbols of this unique altar that is Christ. That is why our altars bear five crosses carved into them, representing Christ's five wounds. Our altars are baptized so to speak, just as Christ was, and they are anointed symbolically, as is the Anointed of the Lord, our Messias. It is on this symbolic level, or rather on this level of sacramentalism and only on this level, that we can claim to have altars such as the other religions have had.

Wherever there is a symbol, the meaning of the symbol must be understood. It is up to the pastor and to the one who explains the rites to make the symbol as clear as possible and to reveal its meaning to Christians as explicitly as possible (see p. 219 above, Note 2).

As we have said, an altar is a meeting place, a table of exchanges between God and man. True, Christ is at once our altar, our priest, our victim, our food, our life, etc. But at our altars Christ is represented as Altar, and not as Priest or as source of life, etc. Our altars must therefore have the appearance of "meeting places" between God and man.

Now it is not the tabernacle but the altar that thus "represents" Christ. The role of the tabernacle is to contain the Holy Eucharist. The ancient Roman basilicas and the old Latin churches anterior to the twelfth century possessed only a simple and unadorned altar. Its bareness, its isolation, its slight elevation, the fact that nothing

was permitted to be set upon it except what was needed for the celebration of Mass, and the fact that not even ashes or palms were placed upon it to be blessed, clearly expressed its sacred character. When Mass was to be celebrated, the cloths and candles and all other necessary things were brought. And this tradition has been preserved in our present-day liturgy for Good Friday and the Paschal Vigil. Thus the faithful, who respected the strange isolation and bareness of this table, understood the meaning of the solemn "exchange" of the Mass, in which the priest, who officially represents Christ the Priest, offers God the thanksgiving of the Church, and in which God feeds us with the Body and Blood of His Son.

The altar adorned with gewgaws and lace is not "religious" because of such adornment. On the contrary, we can often deduce from it the decadence of the religious spirit. And it sometimes happens that this religious spirit has lost all meaning. It is customary to respect a table prepared to receive distinguished guests. How much more, therefore, should we respect the Eucharistic Table where Christ symbolically meets His Father.

The Blessed Sacrament and images. There would be a complete misunderstanding of what we have just said if this statement were taken as a manifestation of iconoclasm or as deprecatory to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It is of faith that images must be honored in the Church (see on this subject the Reflections for Chapter II of Volume V, p. 137), and that the Blessed Sacrament must be adored not only during Mass but also outside the Mass, wherever it may be. History teaches us that every time special worship of the Blessed Sacrament has ceased, orthodox faith in the Eucharist and in its sacramental realism has gradually been lost. This is particularly true of the history of Protestant sects.

But it is one thing to adore the Blessed Sacrament and another to give thanks to the Father with and through Christ. The Mass is not worship offered to Christ, but worship offered by Christ to the Father. It is legitimate and indeed necessary to adore Christ, for otherwise we would forget in practice that He is God, equal to the Father. It is likewise just and necessary to adore the Holy Spirit as the Third Person. But at Mass we give thanks above all to the Father, in union with Christ and in the Holy Spirit (in this connection read the entire Canon of the Roman Mass from the Preface to the Pater Noster). That is how the Mass renews the Last Supper. That is how we follow St. Paul's insistent teaching on the way we

should pray. Because of that, the Mass is the Church's essential worship, her principal worship, the one that it is most important for her to solemnize.

But this worship does not invalidate secondary offices. Quite the contrary. When an object does not receive special worship, there is danger that it may no longer be recognized for what it is. And if the Eucharistic bread and wine are regarded only as symbols, then all the other sacraments, of which the Eucharist is the keystone, lose a part of their significance and value. For example, how can Baptism, which is the first sacrament of initiation, really incorporate us into Christ if the Eucharist, to which it leads us, does not really contain Christ?

While adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is legitimate and necessary, it must also be rightly understood. Catholics sometimes say that they go to adore "le Bon Dieu" when they go to Benediction. True enough, our Savior is "le Bon Dieu." But we must not abuse the "communication of idioms" (see Vol. V, Chapter I, p. 84 ff.), if we want to understand the One whom we are naming. Pastors must be particularly prudent in this domain if they want to be sure of being correctly understood by their faithful.

It is therefore preferable to speak of adoration of "the Blessed Sacrament" and to use "sacramental" terms (such as the Blessed Sacrament, the sacramental Body of Christ) rather than "personal" terms (such as Jesus, Christ, etc.). The Eucharist contains *ex vi sacramenti*, by the fact of its signification, only what the bread (the Body of Christ) or the wine (the Blood of Christ) signifies. The rest is contained *ex reali concomitantia*, from the fact that in Christ now alive in heaven all these elements are united in a single Person.

The Feast of Corpus Christi is also called the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, and the latter is a more apt title from the "sacramental" point of view. It can of course be called the "Feast of the Body of Christ," but care must be taken lest the faithful misunderstand the meaning of these words. Many forget that the Body of Christ is now alive in heaven, and that the Eucharist is only the sacrament of this Body, that is, its figure, and that this figure will disappear at the end of the world.

The danger of signs, even of sacramental signs, is that they may tend to hold our attention instead of leading us to the things they signify. True, the Eucharist also contains the Body of Christ sub-

stantially. But first of all it is the figure of this Body. The consecrated bread would not contain Christ, unless it could be a figure of Him, that is, unless Christ did really exist in heaven in His natural and visible Body. Christ brings it about, through a miracle, that the substance of His Body which is present throughout His Body, should also be in the bread that represents His Body. But Christ does not bring it about that His Body should be contained in anything that is not the sign of bread or that is no longer the sign of bread. When we commune in the Eucharist, we are communing in Christ really and spiritually, wherever He may be here and now. We unite ourselves to Him by means of this sacramental sign. And likewise, when we adore the Blessed Sacrament, we affirm our faith in the reality that this sacrament contains, and our mind unites itself to Christ who is alive simultaneously in heaven and among us.

"Spiritual communion" in the Blessed Sacrament. What we have just said suffices to refute the error of contrasting "spiritual Communion" with the Eucharist and "sacramental Communion." Sacramental Communion is in fact a spiritual communion. "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing" (Jn. 6:63). The sacrament helps our mind to unite itself to Christ, and it is inwardly, in spirit, that the sacrament efficaciously brings about union. Unless a Communion is spiritual, it is without value. After Communion, the priest says: "Grant, O Lord, that what we have taken with our mouth, we may receive with a pure mind" (*Quod ore sumpsimus*. . .). It is interesting to note that the first version of this prayer—the Leonine Post-Communion—did not include the word "pura," but simply said "mente capiamus." Thus an opposition was set up between spiritual Communion, in the sense in which we have just been using it, and a Communion that would be simply material or physical. The Post-Communion for Epiphany, according to the Roman rite, asks "that by a purified mind we may attain to the understanding of that which we solemnly celebrate—*purificatae mentis intelligentia*."

But there is often another error in the opposition that we were pointing out. Not only is "spiritual Communion" opposed to "sacramental Communion," as if only the former were spiritual, but it is forgotten that at Mass there is a true spiritual Communion only if this spiritual Communion implies the desire or intention of receiving the sacrament. Let us explain what we mean.

If for one reason or another, effective sacramental Communion is impossible, the soul thus impeded can still have the desire or intention of receiving the sacrament. Such a spiritual Communion is then really a communion with the sacrament even though it is received only *in voto*, and it can bring all the fruits of sacramental Communion. But such a Communion is normally rare, inasmuch as we are not justly prevented from receiving Communion each time we fail to receive it. If we become accustomed not to receive Communion sacramentally, we thereby show that the desire necessary to make our "spiritual Communion" a communion with the sacrament is lacking. And in such case the only time we receive "spiritual Communion" is when we receive sacramental Communion.

Does that mean that every communion with Christ here below must always pass through the sacrament, whether this sacrament is received effectively or only *in voto*? No. The formula is inadequate. Christ, even in His human soul, never stops seeing and loving us, and none of the thoughts of our mind or the movements of our heart are hidden from Him. Thus, at every moment, whether we are in church, engaged in work, or lying awake at night, we can unite ourselves spiritually to Christ, ever-present spiritually within us, whose Spirit we have received and whose members we are.

Now this communion does not pass through the sacrament. It is direct, in the sense that it is without symbol or sacrament. The sacrament is not destined to unite us to Christ in a different way, but to make this same union closer. Sacramental Communion does not bring us another mode of union, but inasmuch as it is the efficacious symbol of this union it helps us in attaining it. When we refrain from receiving sacramental Communion, we are not thereby more closely united to Christ spiritually but on the contrary we are in danger of being much less closely united to Him. Without sacramental Communion, we cannot claim to have another type of union with Christ; rather we have the same type of union but probably in a lesser degree. We can therefore simply say that without sacramental Communion from time to time, we are in danger of losing our purely spiritual union with Christ. That is why the Church asks us to receive Communion at least once a year. That is the minimum requisite if the soul is not to die of hunger. "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you" (Jn. 6:54).

Lastly, we may well wonder what a person means when he says that he "unites himself to a priest's Mass," although he is not present at it. Actually, a person who participates in a Mass unites himself, by means of this sacrament, to the sacrifice of Christ. But he who is deprived of this sacramental sign does not need to inwardly join the sacrifice of Christ by the (invisible) means of a sign at which he is not present. The sacrament, like the sign, is made to help us, by working within us what it signifies. When we are deprived of signs, it seems simpler to go in spirit directly to what they signify without beginning by making a mental picture of these signs in themselves. However, that is not always the case. That is why the above-mentioned formula can be acceptable in the sense that the mere thought of the distant priest whom we know and love is already a "sign" for us and a help in uniting us to Christ. Then, easily uniting ourselves to his intentions and sentiments, we easily unite ourselves likewise to "his Mass."

The Blessed Sacrament and the Divine Office. Certain laymen and priests are disconcerted by certain liturgical rules (ones that are not always followed) which demand that the sacred species not be kept "at the main altar, but in a small chapel or at another altar" (Can. 1268, Sec. 3) "in cathedral, collegial, or conventual churches." They would consider it more "devotional" if the office were said collectively before the Blessed Sacrament. But this rule expresses a different piety, one that is altogether traditional and in conformity with the way of praying taught us by the liturgy of the Mass and of the Divine Office.

In the Office, as in the Mass, we address ourselves to the Father through Jesus Christ. In the Office, as in the Mass, Christ is represented by the person or persons who celebrate. The priest represents Christ at the altar and acts in His name or in His place. Monks, priests, or the laity gathered together to recite the Divine Office represent Christ praying to His Father. Hence they do not turn toward the tabernacle, or even toward the Crucifix, but spontaneously face one another, choir to choir. The Eucharist symbolizes the Body of Christ, which is also the Church, and they themselves *are* this one Church, which in turn is symbolized by the Eucharist. Here again Eucharistic piety is one thing, and the Divine Office is another. But, to repeat, this does not mean that we should neglect or even belittle Benediction or visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Personal devotion, which is so necessary and which seems to be as

little understood today as is the true liturgy, finds an infinitely precious support in the Blessed Sacrament. But personal devotion often finds the Real Presence closer at a side altar or in an intimate and private chapel, than at the main altar.

(b) *The Eucharistic Community*

The Eucharist is the sacrament of unity and assembly. We shall consider: 1) The place of this assembly, the church; 2) the common act of the priest and faithful gathered together—thanksgiving to the Father; 3) the gifts received.

1. The church is not a shelter where Christians can come and pursue their devotions separately or simultaneously. Rather it can be that, but it is first of all something else. The church is the symbol of the Church—the Body of Christ—and the Church is not “the amorphous grouping of all believers” (Dom Botte, “Les rapports du baptisé avec la communauté chrétienne,” in *Quest. lit. et par.*, May-June, 1953, p. 115). Normally, it is a community of brothers whose living bond is the Eucharist. It would serve no purpose to rediscover the true symbolism of the Church if the local church did not first find its true being, which is that of a family of brothers.

This family is constituted first of all by Baptism. When the first Christians said that Baptism “admits the baptized person into the Church,” they were not thinking primarily of the universal Church, but of the local, very concrete, and very human Church, all of whose members the catechumen might have known for a long time. It was by being admitted to the local Church that the baptized person was also admitted to the universal Church (see Dom B. Botte, *art. cit.*, pp. 115-126).

As Dom Botte points out at the end of his article, the question today arises as to whether other than *local* communities (e.g., Catholic Action groups, professional and social groupings, etc.) can be advanced to the rank of baptismal or at least of Eucharistic communities. And will the Church stand passively by and watch the promotion of these new communities? It is difficult to think that such groupings can form *baptismal* communities (because the birth of children and the home are always bound up with a particular place, at least among settled peoples). How, then, can we expect the *Eucharist* to aid the Christianization of these communities? (See on this matter, the author's article “Charité et communautés” in *Supplement de la Vie Spirituelle*, February, 1949, pp. 363-393. See also

the Reflections at the end of Chapter VI of Volume V, p. 410 ff.)

Whatever the nature of the Eucharistic community—whether it is a community centered in a place or a group—it gathers together for the Eucharistic celebration in a given place around an altar. This place is the church. The construction of churches must be in conformity with their function. It seems that this requirement is no longer thought of, for so many modern churches are notoriously monstrous, absurd, inconvenient, and deplorable from the point of view of acoustics. Attempts are made to imitate antiquity, columns are multiplied when it would be so easy to use modern materials to produce a uniform ceiling. Churches are decorated without quite knowing the reason why, etc. On this subject, read “Pour la beauté de la maison de Dieu,” in *L’Art Sacré*, No. 7-8, March-April, 1950, and Pius-R. Régamey, O.P., *Art sacré au XX^e siècle* (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1952).

It would be interesting to study the history of the symbolism used in churches. Many of the churches of antiquity, the Middle Ages, and even modern times, have followed the tradition of the Temple of Jerusalem, which in turn was heir to a universal religious tradition. (See J. Daniélou, S.J., “La symbolique cosmique du temple de Jérusalem,” in *Symbolisme cosmique et monuments religieux* (Paris, Ed. des musées nationaux, musée Guimet, pp. 61-64). And these imitations of the Temple of Jerusalem have sought to represent “the world” according to the cosmology of the time (see *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69). Widespread as this custom of representation may have been, it does not seem to have had any great Christian significance. It was justifiable at a time when it was still thought that “heaven” and the abode of the elect were on the heights. The church, as a symbolical microcosm, then brought us close to the elect symbolically and united us with them. It would be as artificial to copy this ancient symbolism at the present time as to write Gothic and Baroque novels.

2. The Eucharist is a spiritual and communal thanksgiving.

First of all, it is a thanksgiving, that is, everything in the Eucharist goes up toward the Father. Strictly speaking, there is no “descent,” as certain hymns sometimes rather stupidly declare. Even the Consecration does not interrupt this movement of “ascent,” of thanksgiving. At that particular movement, Christ in a certain sense catches us up in this movement. Up until the Consecration, we were presenting our own poor offerings, as symbols of Christ’s offering.

But now Christ assumes them, transforms them into His own offering, into His Body and Blood, and everything is presented to the Father under the sign of the Eucharistic species which are the Body and Blood of Christ.

Christians have lost the sense of this movement of "thanksgiving," which is really the whole of the Mass, in the measure that they have lost the habit of acting, singing, rising, answering the priest, and instead have kept their eyes nailed to their missals. The pastor has at his disposal all the rites, all the sung parts, all the prayers, in a word, the whole Mass, to help the faithful rediscover the sense of this praise and thanksgiving which constitute a movement of ascent toward God.

Secondly, the Mass is a spiritual thanksgiving. It is spiritually, in His mind and heart, that Christ offers Himself up to the Father on the Cross. "If I deliver my body to be burned," says St. Paul, "yet do not have charity, it profits me nothing" (I Cor. 13:3). This means that charity is what makes the offering pleasing to God; in other words, the sacrifice of the heart is the heart of sacrifice. And such is indeed Christ's sacrifice. The reason He delivers up His Body and sheds His Blood for us is because He loves us. His sacrifice is in part visible, but the best and most important part remains invisible. The "host" is in part invisible, just as is the altar, which is also Christ.

And likewise the essential part of our offerings must be invisible and spiritual. It would serve no purpose to bring bread and wine or other offerings to the altar, if they were not the symbol of our interior offering. Even if we offer to the Father that which is most precious in His eyes, the Body and Blood of Christ, we are only making an exterior gesture, and it is of no use to us if we fail to participate in it inwardly.

No doubt the grace of the sacrament will awaken our generosity and help us to offer ourselves, to give ourselves, but we must do our part. Likewise, the priest must know how to nurture, by all the sacramental rites and by his words, this interior movement of offering that is always in danger of being only a gesture with which we are easily satisfied or which we quickly forget. The expression "to offer up one's Communion" has no meaning. Communion cannot be offered up, it must be received. It is the Body of Christ, or His sacrifice, or "the Mass" that the faithful must offer up. Even though the faithful do not have the power to consecrate, they do offer up

their Mass with the priest, and that is why they formerly—and quite legitimately—said that they “celebrated” Mass. (With regard to this expression, attributed to women, read J.-A. Jungmann, *Missarum Solemnia*, Vol. I.)

Lastly, Eucharistic thanksgiving is a communal action. The Eucharist is the sacrament of unity. This signifies that it is a hierarchic action in which the celebrant, the assistants, and the baptized laity all have their own ranks. At the present time, countless efforts are being made to foster this collective action: dialogue Masses, explained Masses, sung and psalmodied Masses, etc. The pastor’s temptation is to have “beautiful Masses” that satisfy him but that bore the congregation of “spectators” and fail to give them a sense of participating in the Mass. The temptation that confronts the devout layman is “to follow the Mass” only in his missal; this procedure is paradoxical and encourages the priest not to bother about him. Unity of action obviously can come only from the concerted action of all, under the direction of the priest.

The abundance of Masses celebrated in certain communities or at certain shrines has brought up the question of concelebration, of the “synchronized” Mass, of the conventual or communal Mass. With reference to this subject, read *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 35, 1953, “Qu’est-ce que la concélébration?” Concerning the question whether the individual Masses of several priests are of greater value than a single Mass at which these priests would all receive Communion, read A. Roguet, “La pratique des messes dites ‘communautaires’” in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 34, 2nd Quarter, 1953, pp. 154-156. (The criticisms of this article clearly do not bear on the doctrine of St. Thomas which Father Roguet has been expounding in these pages.)

3. The Gifts Received. In the Eucharist as in every sacrament there is a dialectic of “the given” and of “the acted upon” which are inseparably bound up. Grace, which is “the thing given,” does not fall upon us as upon a stone, without awakening our spiritual life, that is, without inducing a reaction on our part. And on the other hand, as soon as we enter into the sacramental action, God in a certain sense assumes our interior acts that have been put into motion by this action, until they produce the fruit that the sacrament makes them bear. God’s grace works in symbiosis with our own minds.

Let us apply these principles to the Eucharist. In the Mass there is really no division between the “offering or sacrifice” on the one

hand and the "communion" on the other. Is not the purpose of *Communion* to assimilate us to Christ who *offers* Himself totally to His Father? If that is what Communion is, it represents sacramentally the summit of our offering in Christ and with Him. Analysis of "Postcommunions," whose theme is often—especially in the ancient liturgies—very similar to that of the Secrets, shows that at the moment of the Postcommunion we have still not "gotten beyond" the offering.

On the other hand as soon as the Mass at which we are going to receive Communion begins, and even before it begins, through the intention that we have of participating in it, and while the rites of the Church are unfolding, the gift of Eucharistic *grace* begins to "work" in our souls. This grace gradually makes the soul produce more ardent acts of faith and hope in the sacrament of the Passion, and multiple acts of charity with regard to the *circumstantes* who are communing together in the same Eucharist.

Thus the rites that precede or follow Communion are not meaningless, and it is always detrimental to the soul to fail to participate in them. Such for example is the case when the faithful receive Holy Communion outside the Mass, either before or after, or withdraw from these rites by making their own individual preparation and "thanksgiving" as if the Mass no longer existed. But one of the reasons why the faithful have come to that is simply that pastors are not interested in their participation in the liturgical rites and prayers, and place too much trust in "individual missals." Are these missals, which have represented a very real progress during the years 1920–1940, now going to prevent still greater progress?

But there are some who do not receive Communion. Are the rites of the Mass and its celebration as profitable to them as to the others? Normally not. True, they can receive "spiritual Communion" in the manner we have already indicated. However, this possibility did not prevent the Church of the first centuries from sending away non-Communicants after the Offertory, and reserving the "mysteries" for those who effectively participated in them.

However there is one portion of the Mass at which the Church has insisted upon the presence of non-Communicants—i.e., the catechumens and penitents—and that is precisely the Mass of the Catechumens. Father Philippeau remarks:

"It is the scornful casuistry of history that today obliges even those who cannot receive Communion to assist under pain of sin at rites from which

they would have been excluded in primitive times; and yet makes it no sin for them to miss the pedagogical portion of the Mass which is meant precisely for them. Would it not be more expedient to abandon the moral and juridical categories of examination and to return to the notion of necessity that intends the Mass of the Catechumens to be open to everyone, and the mysteries to be for the Communicants; and to stop winking at the presence of the others?" (*"L'évolution des rites sacramentels,"* in *Quest. lit. et par.*, March-April, 1953, p. 80).

And this brings us to the "pedagogical portion" of the Mass, which is an essential part of it. The giving of the spoken word is inseparable from the giving, under sacramental species, of the Word Incarnate. The pulpit and the altar are indissociable. But just what is the "sermon"? And what is the "homily"? How is the sermon also a "liturgical act"? (See J. Leclercq, "Le sermon acte liturgique," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 8, pp. 27-46.) What is its place in the liturgy? What relationship does it have to the Eucharistic thanksgiving, to the Biblical readings in the Mass? What type of teaching characterizes the sermon? Must the priest speak in the sermon to the non-converted ("missionary preaching"), or to the catechumens, the newly baptized, or to the habitual Communicants? Is it legitimate to speak to the faithful only of "works" and money matters in the "liturgical act" which is the sermon? Is it not on the contrary an intolerable abuse?

Can the sermon be omitted from Sunday Masses, and thus habitually deprive the faithful of God's Word? Needless to say, this last question is asked from a theological and not merely a canonical point of view. How must the priest's Word "unite" the faithful in this sacrament of unity? What is the legitimacy, or the relative utility of "men's Masses," "ladies' Masses," and "children's Masses," which divide the family?

We could ask many more questions in the same vein concerning the problem of the sermon. Now that parish priests are increasingly burdened with administrative questions or matters that concern the material aspects of worship, they often seem to become "officials of worship," either incapable of bearing God's Word or "not having the time for it." And on the other hand the faithful seem to have less and less religious instruction and to be unable to receive the "Word" that they hear. This "disgust" with the Word is threatening to make our religion one without soul, without life, without spirit, totally opposed to "the religion in spirit and in truth" according to

the Gospel of Christ. Indeed, this seems to be the greatest drama of the modern pastorate.

Lent and Easter

Special mention must be made of the rites of the annual celebration of Easter,* which is the center of our worship. We shall merely indicate a few themes for study: Easter, its origins and pre-figurations in the Old Testament—the agrarian feast of spring, the feast of the liberation of Egypt; the institution of the Christian feast; Lent (see *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 31, 3rd quarter, 1952).

The pastoral theology of Lent and penance; Lenten confessions; the preparation for Baptisms; the Biblical initiation of the faithful and its conformity with the Quadragesimal (forty-day) initiation.

Holy Thursday and the reconciliation of penitents; Holy Thursday and the blessing of the holy oils (current significance of the ceremony); Holy Thursday and the priesthood; Holy Thursday and Christian unity—how to make this unity manifest today by gathering around the bishop; how to unite parish Masses to the bishop's Mass; the washing of the feet—the significance of this action in the Gospel, its current symbolism; the repository—its signification, its purpose, the danger of false interpretations.

Good Friday; origins of the liturgy, the meaning of the texts and ceremonies; significance of the "adoration" of the Cross; the sentiments of sadness and joy that this feast must inspire; the origins and significance of the Mass of the Presanctified, at which only the priest receives Communion; the origins of the Way of the Cross—why it stops before the Resurrection, the meaning and dangers of this omission.

Holy Saturday; the mystagogy of the Easter Vigil; the meaning of the elements (in the Bible and in nature)—fire, wax, honey, bees, incense, baptismal water, baptismal basin, oils, etc.; the theology of Baptism and Confirmation according to the ancient liturgy of the Vigil.

4. OTHER QUESTIONS OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Although the question of participating—or making others participate—in the rites in a truly spiritual way is a serious and funda-

* (Tr. Note: The reader will be aware that this section on Easter and Holy Week was written before the decree of November 16, 1955, by which the Sacred Congregation of Rites renewed the liturgical order of Holy Week.)

mental one, sacramental pastoral theology is not limited to the problems that we have just considered. We shall close by offering a few more themes for pastoral reflection:

Private Baptisms in hospitals, clinics—the origins of this practice, its reason for being, and its dangers; the baptism of miscarriages, Baptism “in utero”—the origins of these practices, conclusions concerning their validity. Can we hold today, as did the theologians of the Middle Ages, that the child who has not yet been “born” cannot be subject to the sacrament of “re-birth”? (See St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, IIIa, q. 68, art. 11, ad 1.) Who is to take the initiative in conferring Baptism in case the infant has lost his parents? Can a theology be drawn up in this matter on the basis of the Mortara affair (1858) and the Finaly affair (1950–1953)? With reference to this subject, see the excellent and well-documented article by A. Léonard, O.P., “L’affaire Finaly: Les questions qui demeurent,” in *La revue nouvelle*, December 15, 1953, pp. 572–581.

The baptism of engaged couples—how can we be sure of the “conversion” of the non-Catholic party? How can mercy be joined to the truth of the sacrament? How should the convert be prepared, and his perseverance followed up? Is the case identical for husband and wife?

Group instruction of catechumens—the role of laymen, Sisters, and priests; a program for the group-catechizing of adults in a large city. Can the clandestine Baptism of adults be accepted? In other words, is it possible to belong to the Church individually and secretly (which is said to be the case of certain famous contemporary personalities)? If so, in what circumstances? The questions this raises. Can faith be simply a matter of conscience?

The problem of “converts” who have already been baptized as children, but who have not been initiated or have lived away from the Church so long that their reconciliation calls for a sort of new Christian initiation (see H.-R. Philippeau, “Les catéchuménats modernes et la réconciliation des convertis,” in *L’Église et le pécheur*, 2nd edition, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1948, pp. 215–222).

What are we to think of this sad declaration by a country pastor: “Most of the time our ministry consists in baptizing future apostates, in making children take on obligations at their Solemn First Communion which they will not and cannot keep, in administering a sacrament sacrilegiously on the occasion of weddings, in granting

absolution to persons who have lost all sense of sin, in giving ecclesiastical burial to persons who have denied the faith in practice" (*Bull. aux aum. de la J.A.C.*, Dec., 1943).

Can we write a treatise of the spiritual life, starting with Baptism? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in Baptism, in Confirmation, in the Eucharist (the epiclesis)?

The names given to Christians in Tradition: saints, the elect, the chosen ones, the illumined ones, the faithful, believers, practicing Christians; the origins of these names, their significance and scope.

Baptism of blood; the role of the martyr in the Church (see Vol. IV, Chapter VIII, on Fortitude).

Preaching and Christian education; to whom should Christian education be given? Is it legitimate to differentiate according to social classes, and cultures? How should this differentiation be made? How should this education be given, and where? Who should give it? What educational program should be followed? Does the layman have a role to play in it? Is it a sound practice for adult catechumens in certain cities to be trained solely by Sisters?

The problem of tolerance; is the Christian forbidden to awaken in his neighbor a certain anxiety over the problem of his salvation? Is it permissible for the Christian to be completely disinterested in the salvation of his brothers—especially of his relatives? And yet can anyone force a non-believer to be concerned over his salvation? Where does intolerance begin? On this matter, read R. Aubert, L. Bouyer, etc., "Tolérance et communauté humaine—Chrétiens dans un monde divisé," *Cahiers de l'actualité religieuse*, Tournai, Casterman, 1952; also L. de Naurois, "Le concept de laïcité dans le droit public français," *Cahiers universitaires catholiques*, May, 1953, pp. 364-385, and June, 1953, pp. 431-446.

The problem of Mass stipends; their origins and theological significance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

We shall first present works that concern Christian initiation. The Eucharist will first be considered as a *sacrament of initiation* closely related to Baptism and Confirmation: it is like the nuptial banquet that terminates the (baptismal) wedding ceremony between the soul and Christ. We shall then present studies concerning the Eucharist considered as the *permanent sacrament of the initiates* and the center of all Christian worship. For Baptism, see the bibliography on pp. 89-90.

1. *Christian initiation*A. *Catechetics*

What must a convert know in order to be baptized? This is the primary question involved in the initiation of adults. On this subject, see:

Bretagne, G. de. *Pastorale catéchistique*. Paris: Desclée, 1953.

Rétif, A. *Foi au Christ et mission*, in the coll. "Foi vivante." Paris: Cerf, 1953. Contains an important bibliography.

Weber and Killgallon, eds. *Life in Christ. A Catechism for Adults*. Chicago, 1958.

It is also helpful if we can compare the first confessions of Christian faith with the knowledge demanded of catechumens today:

Cullmann, O. *Les premières confessions de foi chrétiennes*. Paris: Pr. Univ. de Fr., 1948.

Kelly, J. N. D. *Early Christian Creed*. London: Longmans, 1952. Undoubtedly the best modern work on the history of the Credo.

Nautin, P. *Je crois à l'Esprit-Saint dans la sainte Église, pour la résurrection de la chair*. Paris: Cerf, 1947. Shows the baptismal orientation of primitive symbolism.

A question that concerns pastors today is the problem of Christian formation not outside the liturgy, but through it. The work of almost all the contemporary liturgical movements is involved here, and mention can be made again of the reviews listed in the bibliography for Chapter I; also of the collections of the Centre de Pastorale liturgique, particularly "Lex Orandi," "L'esprit liturgique," "Bible et missel," "Albums liturgiques." And see:

Demann, T. *La catéchèse chrétienne et le peuple de la Bible*. Paris: Cahiers sioniens.

Paris, P. *L'initiation chrétienne*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1941.

On the introduction to the Bible see the bibliography for Chapter II of Volume I of the Theology Library.

The problem of the liturgy immediately raises the problem of liturgical language. Is Latin a necessity? Must there be an initiation to Latin also? If so, how? On these questions, besides the numerous articles in reviews, see:

Bardy, G. *La question des langues dans l'Église ancienne*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1948.

Cunliffe, C. R. A., ed. *English in the Liturgy, A Symposium*. London: Burns, Oates, 1956.

Malingrey, A. M. *Initiation au latin de la messe*. Paris: Éd. de l'École, 1951.

On the initiation of children, see any of the following authors, who are particularly competent in this field: M. Fargues, Abbé Colomb, Fr. Derrenne, H. Lubienka de Lenval, Ch. Quinet, Chan. Boyer. Also see the following works:

Hoffinger, J. *The Art of Teaching Christian Doctrine*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1957.

Sauvageot, P., and Lacquin, G. *L'initiation de l'enfant au mystère chrétien par la Bible et la liturgie*. Paris: Éd. de Fleurus.

Sauveboeuf, A. de. *Our Children and the Mass*. Chicago: Fides, 1955.

Finding a good missal for a child is a problem. Help can be had from the critical examination of children's missals made by L. Kammerer and A. de

Sauveboeuf in *Missels de communion, missels pour enfants*, Paris: Éd. du Centre de Pastorale liturgique, 1952. The bibliography in this work will need to be kept up to date; in particular, two remarkable new daily missals should be added to it: one by the Benedictines of Hautecombe (Éd. Labergerie), the other by P. Feder (Éd. Mame).

B. *Initiation and the liturgy. Initiation to the sacramental rites.*

Many missals today contain good explanations of the liturgical ceremonies; fuller knowledge can be obtained from the following works:

Chanson, A. *Pour mieux administrer baptême, confirmation, eucharistie, extrême-onction*. Arras: Brunet, 1952.

Crogaert, A. *Baptême, confirmation, eucharistie*. Bruges: St. Andrew's.

———. *Les cérémonies du baptême et de la confirmation*. 3rd ed. Paris-Bruges, 1944.

Dubosc, A. *Les étapes de la vie chrétienne*. Paris: Desclée S. Jean, 1934. An excellent manual.

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Liturgical albums: *Baptism, Confirmation, The Mass, Sacraments of the Sick, Marriage*. Chicago: Fides. Illustrated albums, with a sound basis in theology.

On Baptism in the Byzantine rite, see:

Dumont, C. J. "Le baptême dans le rite byzantin," in *La vie spirituelle*, June, 1950, pp. 584-594.

Mercenier, E., and Paris, F. *La prière des Églises de rite byzantin*. 3 vols. Éd. de Chèvotogne.

2. *The Eucharist, sacrament of the initiated and center of the Christian cult*

A. *Origins and tradition*

a. *Biblical studies*

Allo, E. B. "La synthèse du dogme eucharistique chez saint Paul," in *Revue Biblique*, 1921, pp. 321-343.

Benoit, J. "Le récit de la terre dans Luc 22, 15-20," in *Revue biblique*, 1939, pp. 357-393.

Coppens, J. "Eucharistie," in *Suppl. du Dict. de la Bible*, v. II, col. 1146-1215.

Goossens, W. *Les origines de l'Eucharistie sacrement et sacrifice*. Paris: Gembloux, 1931. There is an important bibliography in this volume and in the article by Coppens above.

Lebreton, J. "Eucharistie," in *Dict. apolog.*, col. 1548-1585.

Ruch, C. "Eucharistie dans la Sainte Écriture," in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, vol. V, col. 989-1121, and "Messe dans la Sainte Écriture," in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, vol. X, col. 795-863.

b. *Tradition*

There are many works on the history of the Mass. It will suffice to mention one of the more recent of these and to recommend its bibliography:

Maurice-Denis, N., and Boulet, N. *Eucharistie, ou La messe dans ses variétés, son histoire et ses origines*. Paris: Letouzey and Ané, 1953.

On the concept of the Eucharistic community, see:

Chirat, H. *L'assemblée chrétienne à l'âge apostolique*. Paris: Cerf.

Also to be recalled here is H. de Lubac's masterpiece, *Corpus Mysticum*, "L'Eucharistie et l'Église au Moyen Âge," Paris: Aubier, 1944. (Compare with E. Dumontet's *Corpus Domini*, "Aux sources de la piété eucharistique médiévale," Paris: Beauchesne, 1942.)

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Bernadot, M. V. *De l'Eucharistie à la Trinité*. Paris: Cerf.

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La Taille, P. de. *The Mystery of Faith*. 2 vols. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1950.

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Masure, E. *The Christian Sacrifice*. New York: Kenedy, 1943.

———. *The Sacrifice of the Mystical Body*. Chicago: Regnery, 1957.

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Thomas Aquinas, St. "The Eucharist," in *Summa Theol.* III, QQ. 73-83.

Vonier, A. *A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*. Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1946.

Also see the dictionary and encyclopedia articles under "Eucharist," "Liturgy," "The Mass," "Transubstantiation."

C. Pastoral life

a. Preaching, instructing

On preaching, the classic work is by A. D. Sertillanges, *L'Orateur chrétien* (Paris: Cerf, 1931). Its first chapters, on the word of God, its sources, its interior supports, and its sections on the characteristics of the preacher and his work can always be re-read with profit. There is still no adequate work, however, on the sermon and on liturgical preaching, a work which would treat the latter's aim, its content (the difference, for example, between teaching converts who are preparing for Baptism and teaching the faithful at Mass), its method (the difference between teaching theology in a university and pastoral teaching), its materials, its audiences. There are lessons to be learned—provided adaptations are made for the pastoral needs of our own time—from earlier periods:

Bonnes, J. P. *Homélaire patristique*, Coll. "Lex Orandi." Paris: Cerf.
Homélie pascales, Coll. "Sources chrétiennes," 2 vols. Paris: Cerf.

Also helpful is:

La messe et sa catéchèse, Coll. "Lex Orandi." Paris: Cerf, 1947.

b. *Mystagogy (initiation in the rites of the Mass; formation through the rites)*

There are many works explaining the rites of the Mass; the following are among the best:

- Battifol, P. *Leçons sur la messe*. Paris: Gabalda, 1919.
 Brun, P. 1e. *Explication de la messe*. Paris: Cerf, 1949. New edition of a classic work.
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THE SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

The first three sacraments are the foundation of the Church's sacramental system. From the very origins of the Church, in every locality and even in all Christian confessions, Baptism and the Eucharist have been accepted as the foundation of Christian worship. As for Confirmation, we know that we must not consider it as a simple complement of Baptism, and yet that is what it is first of all. This is our first certitude.

And we have another certitude: the sacramental practice of the Church has never been reduced to the practice of the first three sacraments. Even in Apostolic times, the Church used many other "sacred signs." No difficulty arises from the fact that the Church did not define at once the number of these signs, that the theologians did not always distinguish those things that were signs and no more, those that were "sacramentals," and those that were "sacraments," in the sense we now understand these terms. The life and practice of the Church usually outstrip the speculations of theologians.

The sacramental practice of the Church did not change between the ninth and thirteenth centuries, and yet we see that Paschasius Radbertus in the ninth century placed the Incarnation and Holy Scripture among the "sacraments"; that St. Peter Damian in the eleventh century enumerated twelve "sacraments"; and that St. Bernard in the twelfth counted ten "sacraments." Such variation is no longer possible now that the Church has specified that among the signs she has chosen from the physical world and in which she firmly believes only the following are sacraments in the strict sense, i.e., those signs which through the centuries have presented themselves as acts that sanctify Christians and edify the Body of Christ. These alone are now defined as sacraments. The Church has enumerated and defined them not according to certain *a priori* views or according to a completely theoretical search through Scripture, but according to the vital needs she has recognized within herself since she was constituted by the Word of God.

Christians have various spiritual needs. The need to be born and to become a child of God is one thing, and the need for food is another. The need to be cured from present spiritual illness is distinct from the need to regain strength *after* spiritual illness and in time of physical illness. Two sacraments of "healing" have been

instituted to answer the needs of Christians: the sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction. Both were instituted by Christ. The former heals through the power Christ gave His Apostles to remit sins; and the second heals when He sends His Apostles to anoint the sick. The Church is aware that both of these sacraments belong to her sacramental patrimony, and has defined them as such.

Chapter IV

PENANCE

by M. Mellet and A.-M. Henry, O.P.

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Chapter IV

PENANCE

I. The History of the Sacrament of Penance

The history of Christian repentance is long and winding. It reflects perhaps more perfectly than any other sacramental history the long and homogenous evolution of Christian sentiment in one of its richest and most delicate expressions. Observers outside the Catholic Faith are often struck by the formal and juridical character of the present-day practice of administering the sacrament of Penance. The Church's penitential institution has not always presented such impoverished forms. It is evident, on the contrary, that the Christian soul has always been particularly sensitive to the interior values of this institution, just as the Gospel presented it and as the Apostolic Church understood it even in circles still imbued with the ancient ritualism inherited from the Old Testament.

1. THE ORIGINS

(a) *The Old Testament*

While the Old Testament can be rightly understood only in the light of the New, it is also true that the New Testament has been possible only by virtue of the preparations of the Old Testament. The Christian refining of repentance presupposes progress in the Jewish religious conscience. Little by little, the legalism and ritualism that are the most outstanding traits of the Jewish conception of sin and expiation gave way to a more inward sense of repentance.

In many primitive texts, sin appears to us more as a collective than as a personal fact. The guilty nation was invited to repent by men of God who had risen up within it. But the prophets gave Israel a message of true interior repentance. The call to love is pressing in Osee. After great national disasters, concern for personal salvation through individual penance took increasing precedence with Jeremias and still more with Ezechiel.

The admirable Penitential Psalms show the depth and delicacy of the sentiment of repentance to which the Jewish soul had progressed. These Psalms were also to become the favorite prayers of

Christians, for the expression of their own penitential sentiments. The Sapiaential Books are in the same spiritual tradition, but they are less spontaneous and add to the sharp sense of sin and repentance a note of optimism drawn from the "joyful hope" of God's forgiveness (see Wisd. 12:10-19).

(b) *The New Testament*

It is in this "joyful hope" that the evolution of the sense of repentance in Israel culminated and that Christian penance was born. But the God of Jesus Christ is none other than the God of Abraham, and the sinner is no different under grace than under the Law. It is not surprising, therefore, to hear John the Baptist and even Christ utter threats that call to mind the vehement oburgations of the ancient prophets: "Unless you do penance, you shall perish" (Mt. 3:1,8; Lk. 3:3-6). Penance remains so essential that the Savior's preaching, which opened by a call to penance, concluded with the command "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Lk. 24:47).

Terrible as these threats are, the dominant sentiment of Christian penance is the sentiment of trust in God. Evidently God is just, but He is also an indulgent and tender Father. The parable of the prodigal son shows God's untiring goodness toward the sinner. It was the prodigal son's father who went forth to meet his child on the road by which he was to return. Jesus Christ likewise takes the initiative in arousing penance through His grace. It was His grace that drew to Him the woman who had entered, unbidden, the house of Simon the Pharisee; it was His grace that stirred up repentance in her heart while He pronounced the efficacious words of forgiveness (Lk. 7:48-50).

Jesus knew He possessed the power to remit sins (Lk. 5:18-20). It was this power that He transmitted to His Apostles in the form of a "sacrament": their words would restore the life of God to repentant souls (Mt. 28:18-20; Jn. 20:21-23). The Apostles inherited Christ's mission and promises, and confidently exercised the sanctifying authority that He had conferred upon them. Let us remember, for example, St. Paul's attitude in the matter of the incestuous man of Corinth (I Cor. 5:1-5).

How did the institution of Penance function in the Apostolic communities? It is difficult to say with certainty. What is clearly

evident is that Baptism remitted sins (Acts 2:38), but we do not see that remission was assured by a special rite. On the contrary, the extreme severity against the sins of baptized Christians (see Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31) seems to have excluded recourse to another sacrament by a second forgiveness. This severity was doubtless necessary to manifest the grandeur of the new life brought by Christ.

Be this as it may, the important thing is not so much that penitential practice may not always have been what it is today, but that in every case in which the Church has exercised authority over the sinning faithful, she has always maintained, as she still does today, that she was remitting sins in the name of God through powers received from Christ.

(c) *The primitive Church*

The Church remits sins first of all through baptism: *unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum*. Inasmuch as Baptism was originally conferred chiefly upon adults, it implied a total conversion on their part. It was expected that after Baptism the commission of grievous sins would be the exception rather than the rule. In consequence, forgiveness of these grave sins was rarely exercised, and it took on an importance equal to that of Baptism. That is why it was called a "second Baptism," a "laborious Baptism." For it was granted with much greater reservations than the "first" Baptism, and a time was to come when the faithful put off being baptized as long as possible because of this very fact.

We get an impression of severity from the documents that have come down to us from the first two centuries: the *Prima Clementis*, and the *Didache*. While they reveal the existence of sinners who were kept out of the community and of the Eucharistic gathering, and the existence of faithful with worried consciences, they do not show us any existing means of post-baptismal reconciliation. It can however be asserted that the existence of a precise penitential discipline at the beginning of the third century presupposes that something of this nature existed in the preceding period.

2. THE ORGANIZATION OF PENANCE

(a) *The third century*

The third century was an important period in the history of Penance. It was the epoch when discipline was crystallized and began

to take on uniformity. "There was a penitential institution whose functioning reminds us somewhat of a tribunal; its effects even then were primarily external, although they could also have interior repercussions."¹

The predominant tendency was toward severity. It is this trend that found expression notably in Tertullian (*De pudicitia*), Hippolytus (*Philosophoumena*), Origen (*De oratione*), St. Cyprian (*Testimonia*, *De lapsis*). Emphasis seems to have been upon exterior reconciliation with God. But the thesis of severity led the heretics—e.g., the Montanists and Novatians—to such excesses that the Doctors reacted by a gradual shift of emphasis to the interior mystery of repentance and forgiveness. It should be pointed out, however, that rigorism found justification in the abusive indulgences granted in several instances to Christians who had fallen into apostasy during the persecution of Decius. Thus for a long time penitential discipline fluctuated between severity and mercy.

What was the practice of penance like in the third century?

To begin with, only baptized Christians could be justified through penance, and only their serious sins were matter for penance. But what were these serious sins? There was no uniform method of determining what they were. However, it was agreed that a grave sin was one that seriously harmed the community. And such a sin could be secret and interior. The admission of the sin was made to ecclesiastical authority: namely, the bishop or priest.

Were certain categories of sinners excluded from the sacrament of Penance? Recidivists were unquestionably excluded; for there was then only one Penance, just as there was only one Baptism. At the end of the third century the Church's forgiveness was refused even to certain dying sinners. However, even from the beginning of this same century, the thesis of indulgence won out here and there. For St. Cyprian, no sin was irremissible.

The sinner's confession of his sin had two public consequences: satisfaction (exclusion from the church and from the Eucharistic gathering); and reconciliation—but the latter came afterward. In this economy, the role of the "confessor" seems to have been rather small. By contrast, the acts of the penitent held the most prominent place. Reconciliation took on the aspect of a reconciliation with the Church betrayed by the sinner. On the other hand, there was no

¹ E. Amann, in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, art. "Pénitence," Vol. 13, col. 775.

prejudging of God's sentence, for He could forgive a sinner condemned by the community. But as a reaction against Montanism, it came to be realized that reconciliation with God was accomplished by means of reconciliation with the Church, which has the power to bind and to loose in heaven and on earth. In other words, the Church was coming to the practical notion of the sacrament of Penance as a visible rite exercised by a social authority that re-establishes the normal relations of grace between God and the soul.

In the third century, the Church had the very strong conviction that she possessed the power "to bind and to loose" sins. She exercised this power in public rites and with great severity inspired by the acute sense of the social gravity of sin.

(b) *The fourth and fifth centuries*

The propensity to mercy, which had difficulty breaking through in the third century, asserted itself during the fourth and fifth centuries. This was the disturbed and fruitful period of the great heresies (Arianism, Donatism), and of the barbarian invasions. It was also the period of Diocletian's persecution, which witnessed widespread apostasy and, after peace was restored, many requests for reintegration into the Church. The Church was confronted with an influx of unreliable Christians for whom the penitential discipline then in use was too severe, and who preferred to avoid this discipline by putting off their Baptism as long as possible.

The result was that Christians rarely had recourse to the sacrament of Penance, and pastors became more lenient. Public reconciliation remained solemn and severe, as shown by the penance imposed by St. Ambrose upon the Emperor Theodosius after the massacre of Thessalonica. But untoward incidents, such as the blunders of the grand penitentiary of Constantinople,² revealed the disadvantages of public penance and hastened the trend toward private penance.

Nevertheless, great severity persisted. All grave sins, that is, sins that exclude souls from the kingdom of God—whether they be interior or exterior—called for public penance and were accompanied by public sanctions which were often of long duration, as determined by the bishop. It was then that a sort of "order of penitents" was formed, including various classes and degrees of repentant sin-

² Cf. E. Amann, in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, art. "Pénitence," Vol. 13, col. 111.

ners. This happened in the East, at least. In the West, the penitent remained subject after his reconciliation to a very strict, quasi-monastic regime. Moreover, only persons of mature years were admitted to the *ordo paenitentium*, inasmuch as the sacrament of Penance was not repeated.

Many canonical and patristic documents of this great epoch have come down to us. Among their authors, which include Epiphanius, Ambrose, and Pacian, St. Augustine stands out as a particularly interesting witness to contemporary discipline, especially in his sermons. Many of these documents are of anti-Novatian inspiration, that is, they condemn the blind rigorism preached by the Novatians and affirm, against them, the heavenly effect of ecclesiastical penance. St. Augustine, for example, strove to explain and determine the respective roles of God and of the Church in the sacrament of Penance.³ His thought finds very clear expression in his commentaries on the Gospel episode of the resurrection of Lazarus: Lazarus was brought back from the dead by Jesus Christ, but the Church had to intervene to release him from his bands and to restore him to liberty. St. Leo the Great gives us, with his usual conciseness, the results achieved in this epoch: "Without the priests' supplications, there is no remission of sins. On the contrary, through ecclesiastical reconciliation, return to grace with God is obtained. Indeed, in this great act Christ continually intervenes" (Epist. 108). The notion of the "sacrament of Penance" was becoming more and more precise.

(c) *The end of the Age of Antiquity*

Theology was making considerable progress, as shown by the writings of such men as Fulgentius of Ruspe, Cassian, Gennadius, Caesarius of Arles, and Peter Chrysologus. Penitential discipline, on the other hand, was gradually declining. The causes of this decline are easily discernible. First there was the collapse of the Roman Empire under the blows of the barbarians, and then came the profound depravity of Merovingian society. The many legislative texts from this period reveal the efforts made to maintain the old discipline. Concern was almost wholly with public penance, and private penance was condemned as an abuse. Moreover, after Baptism the sacrament of Penance could be received only once. The procedure used tended to lose its juridical character and became

³ In Ps. 101, *Enar.* II, No. 3; *Sermo* 295, no. 2, etc.

liturgical. Satisfaction now lasted only during the Lenten season, but always involved burdensome sequels. In actual fact, canonical penance was resorted to only by a category of penitent-ascetics who lived in the world, whereas the mass of the faithful waited to be at death's door to benefit from the necessarily simplified and mitigated forms. None the less, the Christian conscience kept a very strong conviction of the necessity of Penance and of its sacramental character.

3. THE TREND AWAY FROM PUBLIC PENANCE AND TOWARD PRIVATE PENANCE

The most striking feature of the penitential institution during the first six centuries of Christianity is that it was the exercise within the Church of a means by which Christians could be liberated from their serious sins committed after Baptism. This means presented itself in the form of an extremely rigorous public procedure, and the privilege of receiving it was granted only once. However discipline gradually gave way to the idea of mercy, as the spiritual effects of penance—i.e., the sacramental character of the penitential rite—were more clearly understood. When the sinner had been liberated from his sins by the Church, he was liberated before God. But at the same time that the idea of penance became more interior and the drama of conscience took precedence over the sentiment of guilt, there was a trend away from public penance toward private penance. This evolution unfolded during the period that extended from the sixth century to the year 1215, the date of the Fourth Lateran Council.

(a) *The sixth and seventh centuries*

From this obscure and confused epoch several curious and significant documents have come down to us known as the "penitentials," which provided confessors with penances appropriate for certain sins. The use of these ready-reckoners shows very well that from then on everything was carried on privately between the penitent and the confessor. It also presupposes that the confession was explicit and detailed, and lastly, that its frequency was left up to personal judgment. For according to the sins counted, it is evident that there was question not only of the "crimes" subject to the earlier public penance, but also of venial sins. Along with these changes, satisfaction was mitigated. Not only was punishment not

as rigorous and as prolonged as formerly, it was no longer obligatory for the penitent to complete his satisfaction before being authorized to receive Holy Communion again.

This new trend was a very important innovation. Whence this new penitential discipline? In the light of present-day research, it seems to have come from the Celtic churches of England and Ireland in the fifth century, and from monasteries which were the nerve centers of ecclesiastical life in these countries. And no doubt it also came from Lérins, whose tradition these monasteries followed. The monks practiced the unburdening of conscience which led them to "the confession of devotion." Their spiritual experience attracted laymen eager to find confessors accustomed to weighing sins and giving appropriate advice. With the spread of Celtic monasticism on the Continent by St. Columban (Luxeuil), private penance was rapidly diffused. It was truly an answer to the yearnings of the Christian soul, which was increasingly orientated toward the interior life and consequently more sensitive to the spiritual significance of penance than to its social import.

But here a question arises: Are we still dealing with penance as practiced during the first centuries? Our answer must take two facts into account: first, the survival here and there of ancient discipline as late as the sixth and seventh centuries; second, the existence in earlier epochs of cases of private penance, especially when the sacrament was administered to the dying. The necessarily abridged rite in such cases prefigured secret confession. We must also realize that the same elements are to be found in both public and private penance, namely: contrition, satisfaction, confession, and the priestly decision. The difference between them may be said to consist in the fact that the emphasis formerly placed on satisfaction was now placed on confession.

(b) *The Carolingian Epoch (ninth century)*

Inasmuch as Penance is an efficacious instrument of moralization, it proved to be an important factor in the Carolingian reform under the impulsion of Alcuin. This reform stressed the role of confession to the priest and insisted more than did the preceding century on the intervention of the Church in the interior remission of sins.

The ninth century was marked by an effort to organize penitential practice, which had become chaotic. The results achieved were to disappear with the crumbling of the Carolingian Empire. Public

and private penance overlapped. The diversity of "penances," which were often fantastic and devoid of authority, begot a tendency toward laxity by making it possible to choose the least burdensome among several "penances."

Things came to such a pass that penitents sought ways of accomplishing in one year a penance of three years. And a "great man" could complete a seven-year penance in three days by hiring an army of peasants who fasted in his place for three days! We can understand that a reaction was necessary, and that Christians concerned about sincerity sought to restore the ancient discipline. But such a restoration was no longer possible. Private penance became more and more widespread, and tended toward present-day practice, but without as yet eliminating public penance. A principle of apportionment then made its appearance: "Hidden penance for hidden sins; public penance for public sins." The novelty of this principle should be emphasized, for throughout primitive times all serious sins—both interior and exterior—fell under public penance.

(c) *From Gratian to the first efforts in theology*

The effort toward unification continued during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, notably with Gratian. The role of the confessor became progressively greater in the matter of judging what penances should be imposed. On the other hand, the practice of "reserved cases" reduced the confessor's role.

The ancient discipline subsisted under the form of what is called "solemn penance," imposed by the bishop for serious public sins. This was distinct from "public penance," which was concerned only with grave sins, and which was administered by simple priests as in the case of "private penance." Public penance was "public" by reason of the satisfaction imposed (such as pilgrimages, etc.), but its procedure did not necessarily denounce the sinner. As for private penance, it took on its present-day aspects during this period, especially with regard to secrecy.

Emphasis was placed on the integrity of confession, the necessity of the sinner's addressing himself to his own priest, *proprio sacerdoti*. Confession tended to become periodic (during Lent) and even frequent, under the influence of the monasteries. The medicinal and ascetic character of the sacrament took on primary importance. From the monasteries also came the practice of confession to laymen, of which there had been examples here and there since the

eighth century. This practice calls to mind "fraternal correction." It was also inspired by the conviction that oral confession was absolutely necessary. In case of urgency and in the absence of a priest, the sinner was supposed to confess to a layman. The satisfaction imposed for sins was mitigated, and the custom of indulgences made its appearance.

Finally, absolution was granted before the completion of the penance. It might be mentioned in passing that the word "absolution" was an innovation of this period; the term used before that time had been "reconciliation." With the exception of its extensive ceremonial, we can readily recognize in the private Penance of that epoch the practice that is so familiar to us today.

Important as this period is from the point of view of its institutions, it is equally significant in the matter of doctrines. Questions were raised that announced the coming of scholasticism: e.g., the relation between confession and interior contrition, the reviviscence of sins. After the pre-scholastics and the two Anselms, the first scholastics took these problems in hand. Among these theologians were Abelard, the Victorines, the writers of the Sentences, of whom the most important, Peter Lombard, fixed a number of doctrinal points.

The theology of Penance in the strict sense began only in the twelfth century. Theologians were particularly interested in determining the respective value of the various parts of the sacrament and in elaborating sacramental theory. Their positions were often confused, encumbered as they often were by contradictory *auctoritates*.

All the theologians of the twelfth century were "contritionists" in the modern sense of the word, although it is evidently an anachronism to apply this word to twelfth-century theology. In other words, they gave the preponderant place to interior contrition. But then, what was the need for confession? They held that it was necessary only in order to enable the priest to make a sound judgment concerning sins.

This theological position left a dogmatic question unsolved: Is the confession of sins necessary by divine right or simply according to ecclesiastical law? The two possible answers to this question were propounded by equally prominent theologians.

The transference of satisfaction to make it follow absolution instead of preceding it indicates that it had come to be considered as

accessory, whereas interior contrition was the essential. However, satisfaction was maintained because of the temporal punishment due to sin, because of the loss of divine friendship, and because of the need of making expiation in this life if we do not want to be purged of sin in purgatory.

Lastly, although there was no doubt as to the necessity of absolution, its proper role was not as yet clarified. The majority of theologians, including St. Anselm, Abelard, and Peter Lombard, attributed to it only a declarative value: contrition wipes out sins and absolution manifests that contrition has obtained divine forgiveness. On the other hand, the importance of the external effects of absolution was strongly emphasized, as there was still a very keen social sense of sin and repentance.

To sum up, the twelfth century reveals the essential lines of our present-day theology of the sacrament of Penance. The interior elements of the sacrament were closely linked to the Church's intervention. The twelfth century was a continuation of the preceding period, when the Church's role was preponderant, and it prepared the way for the theology of the great Doctors who were to follow. Faithful to the unfolding of tradition, they were to work out a harmonious and profound synthesis which stressed the most intimate elements of repentance that mean so much to the modern soul.

4. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE THEOLOGY OF PENANCE

"The golden age of scholasticism" opened under the sign of "contritionism," as understood above. It was dominated by the famous text of the Fourth Lateran Council, *Omnis utriusque sexus*, and by a name that shines out above all others, St. Thomas Aquinas. These three facts constitute the axis of the development of penitential doctrine in the period extending from the thirteenth century to the Reformation.

(a) *The century of the Summa-writers*

The beginning of the thirteenth century was marked by a frank contritionism. Even the official texts do not set forth the necessity of confession and satisfaction as being a doctrine of faith. This was not because there was any doubt of this necessity, but that scholars differed as to the doctrinal grounds that justified the necessity.

William of Auvergne († 1248) opened an important debate. He made a distinction between contrition (regret inspired by char-

ity) and attrition (regret in which charity has as yet no part). And he asked himself how one could go from attrition to contrition, which is the only basis for obtaining forgiveness (*ex attrito fit contritus*). According to certain theologians, this transition was considered to be the effect of the penitent's personal dispositions, and it occurred *ex opere operantis*. According to others, this transition was due to the sacrament, and came about *ex opere operato*. The former group held that absolution was only an occasional cause of forgiveness: the confessor prayed to God to change the attrition into contrition (William of Auvergne, Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure). The latter, on the contrary (notably St. Albert the Great) tended to insist on the importance of the role of absolution. Once it is granted that contrition implies the desire for absolution, absolution, even *in voto*, must contribute to forgiveness. We shall see that St. Thomas found a most original solution to this question that completely respects the two terms of the problem.

Seen in the context of the times, the difficulty was this: how to reconcile contrition and absolution as both being intrinsic parts of the sacrament? While absolution was far from having at that time the importance to be given to it later by the Council of Trent, it is worth noting that the "contritionists" of the thirteenth century—contrary to the subsequent Protestant view—firmly upheld the role of absolution in the penitential organism, in spite of the embarrassment it caused them. Two facts will prove that they considered absolution necessary. First, the obligation to confess one's sins to a layman, should a priest be unavailable, under the pretext that a sinner must do what he can to give external expression to his desire for absolution even when it is impossible to secure it. Second, the trend away from the deprecativ formula of absolution to the indicative formula in which the decisive authority of the confessor appears as a real factor in the remission of sins.

The problem of contrition remained. Only contrition assures forgiveness. What then was the role of oral confession and absolution in the sacrament?

An important event of the thirteenth century should be mentioned, namely, the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), *Omnis utriusque sexus*. By this decree all the faithful were obliged to go to confession at least once a year, and to their own pastor. This purely disciplinary decree strengthened the already strong con-

viction as to the necessity of absolution. All theologians were now agreed that the confession of sins must be made only to a priest, and denied a sacramental character to confession to a layman, even when they thought such a confession necessary. But what was the role of confession in the remission of sins? Many saw it merely as a condition *sine qua non*. This explanation was inadequate, even though it assured the doctrinal continuity of this epoch with the subsequent evolution of the dogma.

All in all, the early thirteenth century was confronted with two questions: absolution and contrition. The matter of contrition was to be solved later, particularly by theologians of the Scotist school, in the direction of the sufficiency of attrition within the sacrament. The question of absolution was solved by affirming the efficacy of absolution with regard to sins and eternal punishment, providing it was accompanied by expressed repentance on the part of the sinner. At that particular time, these solutions were delayed by three causes: 1) the opposition set up between the objective and subjective elements of the sacrament; 2) the considering of the parts of the sacrament as succeeding each other in time, whereas the sacrament should have been considered as a whole; 3) the partial character attributed to the respective efficacy of the parts (each part supposedly having a particular efficacy relative to a particular effect of sin: moral imperfection, eternal punishment, canonical punishment). It took the synthesizing genius of St. Thomas to bring about an understanding of the oneness of this sacrament.

(b) *St. Thomas Aquinas*

For St. Thomas, the entire sacrament is a sign and a cause of justification. He recognized the efficacious role of absolution and of the act of the virtue of penance expressed in the sacrament. As he saw it, absolution and the act of the virtue of penance formed as it were the form and the matter of the sacrament, which causes the remission of sins.

St. Thomas' original contribution brought out with great clarity and vigor the sacramental function of the virtue of penance. The act of this virtue, associated with absolution, has the value of an efficacious sign within the sacrament. This is the best possible affirmation of the importance of the personal acts of the penitent in the forgiveness of his sins.

It is obviously around the notion of contrition that St. Thomas concentrated his constructive effort. After declaring that under the impact of operating grace there appears in the sinner's soul a personal act of love, St. Thomas gave a description of the genesis of contrition starting from servile fear and rising to filial fear. His description was to become classical after the Council of Trent adopted it as its own. When contrition is perfected by love, it wipes out sin.

Now the fact that contrition wipes out sin does not mean that confession serves no useful purpose. On this point, St. Thomas took a firm position: confession is necessary to the forgiveness of sins (i.e. of sins that cause the death of the soul). To deny it would have been contrary to the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council, it would have been heresy. No one can take advantage of the privilege of being forgiven before God unless he submits his repentance to the minister that Christ has established to forgive sins in His name.

As for satisfaction, it is efficacious by the same right as the other acts of the penitent, namely, contrition and confession, providing they are all bound up with the priestly act, as matter is bound with its form.

St. Thomas' originality consists in his categorical defense of the indicative formula: *Ego te absolvo*—I absolve thee. For St. Thomas, the deprecativ formula—May God forgive thee—has no sacramental value. Only the priest has the power to grant absolution, for he alone who has power over the real body of the Lord in the Eucharist likewise has power over His Mystical Body in the sacrament of Penance. Nevertheless, should no priest be available, St. Thomas held that one should confess to a layman, inasmuch as it is incumbent on the sinner to do whatever he can. This apparent inconsistency was no doubt a concession to the ideas of his times, but it emphasizes the importance St. Thomas attributed to the role played by the penitent's acts in this sacrament.

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the sacrament of penance is a means that does not eliminate regret but on the contrary makes it ripen inwardly in the penitent sinner's heart. That is the dominant trait of the Holy Doctor's thought, the one that inspires the harmonious and solid synthesis into which he organized the disparate elements received from earlier theologians.

(c) *Duns Scotus*

St. Thomas' synthesis was soon subjected to the attacks of the Franciscan Duns Scotus (1274–1308). To the mind of the Subtle Doctor, the essence of the sacrament of penance resided solely in absolution. The acts of the penitent, being integral but not essential parts of the sacrament, were conditions not of the validity of the sacrament but of its fruitful reception. This was a radical rupture between the virtue of penance and the sacrament of penance.

According to the Scotists, the sacrament of Penance—like all the other sacraments—was in no sense a physical, or dispositive, or perfective, cause of grace. Scotism subsequent to the Council of Trent merely attributed a “moral causality” to the sacraments. Their thesis went like this: By virtue of a promise freely made and visibly certified by the Church, God is present and acts in this sacrament, that is, He acts in the absolution. Since, according to this theory of “divine assistance,” the role of absolution is purely occasional, it is held that personal activity of the penitent does not need to intervene.

The sacramental occasionalism of Duns Scotus was to reach its fullest expression with certain nominalists. Sin came to be considered exclusively in terms of its sanction, without being referred first to God against whom it is immediately directed. God can then forgive sin without demanding interior conversion. Thus contrition of the heart was on the verge of being eliminated from the sacrament of Penance and there was a trend toward a legalism that is nothing less than the negation of the moral order.

There was an evolution in the mode of thinking opened up by Duns Scotus. In relegating the penitent's acts to a secondary place, the followers of Scotus no longer needed to defend confession to laymen. Duns Scotus primed the movement that was to lead to the disappearance of this practice. Correlatively, by emphasizing the role of absolution, he drew attention to the priest's role in forgiveness more than had been done before.

5. ANTI-PROTESTANT POLEMICS AND THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

(a) *Luther*

Luther's sacramental doctrine, and his doctrine of penance in particular, is the logical culmination of the nominalism with which

he was imbued. According to Luther, the sinner is radically corrupted by sin and therefore incapable of repenting. What the sinner is capable of, according to Luther, is limited to a sense of sorrow born of the knowledge of his damnation. This awareness terrifies the sinner and makes him despair at the thought of God's judgments. But then the soul discovers the consolations and promises of the Gospel. It abandons itself with confidence to God, who imputes the merits of Christ to the sinner and looks upon him as if he were justified. The essential attitude of the sinner, therefore, consists in faith in the Gospel and trust in God, which alone assured his forgiveness.

According to Luther, what is known as "the power of the keys" is simply a teaching of the Gospel destined to give us this faith and to assure us we are forgiven. The priest possesses no jurisdiction as coming from Christ, but is merely the minister of the Gospel when he absolves. Therefore it is pointless to speak of the divine institution of the sacrament of Penance. Christ never intended to make our forgiveness depend upon a contrition and a judgment that would oblige us to confess our sins and to agree to make satisfaction. How could such a powerful contrition spring from a totally corrupted heart, and without doing injustice to the Savior's merits? And how could the infinite satisfaction of Christ leave room for our satisfactions? The only true penance is a transformation of one's life. All the rest is a human invention.

This "reformed" theology is to be found integrally in the teaching of Calvin and Zwingli, as well as that of certain contemporary Protestants who do not hesitate to fling out once more the most scurrilous accusations.⁴

(b) *The Council of Trent*

Confronted by this "reformed" theology and by the caricature it presented of Catholic theology, the Council of Trent drafted the nine chapters and fifteen canons of its fourteenth session.

The attention of the Council Fathers was first drawn to the judicial character of the sacrament of Penance, which distinguishes it from all the others. The minister of Baptism is not a judge, and the subject is not subjected to the judgment of the Church, for she has jurisdiction only over her baptized children. Penance, on the

⁴ Cf. H. C. Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (Philadelphia, 1896), 3 Vol.

other hand, is "a tribunal before which the baptized must present themselves as culprits—*tanquam reos*" (Session XIV, Ch. 2, Denz. 895). The exercise of this judgment belongs to the priest alone.

Without entering into the controversies of the schools, the Council saw that the virtue of the sacrament resides "principally—*praecipue*" in absolution. And yet it shows equal concern with the three acts of the penitent: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. These three acts are "parts" of the sacrament. They are its *quasi materia*, and this gives us to understand that they enter into the essence of the sacrament and contribute to its effect: reconciliation with God. The importance given to contrition confirms this interpretation, which opposes the thought of the Council of Trent to that of Duns Scotus.

Contrition, according to the Council of Trent, is "a sorrow of mind and a detestation for sin that has been committed, together with the purpose of not sinning in the future. . . . It implies not only an abstention from sin and the resolution and beginning of a new life, but also a hatred of the old" (Session XIV, Ch. 4). This definition, aimed directly at Lutheran teaching, is simply an echo of Tradition. The same applies to the distinction between contrition and attrition. The Council recognizes that contrition remits sins even before the reception of the sacrament, but not without the firm purpose of receiving the sacrament. We shall come back to this teaching when we explain the theology of Penance.

With regard to the confession of sins, the Council affirms its necessity by divine right and proves it by the fact that our Lord established priests to be "presidents and judges," a function that implies the confession of sins on the part of penitents. This confession can be secret; and it is a legitimate practice, not invented by the Fourth Lateran Council as claimed by the Protestants.

Finally the Council defends the legitimacy of satisfaction. Far from being an offense against the universal and infinitely adequate satisfaction of our Savior, our satisfaction has value only through His, and constitutes the personal contribution we must bring to our own salvation. In addition to reasons of pedagogy (we understand our sins better when we must make reparation for them), there are reasons of strict justice why man must cooperate in his own salvation if adequate satisfaction is to be made. The Council calls to mind that the trials of this life can have a satisfactory value.

The Council of Trent determined the penitential doctrine by

which we live today. Unfortunately, it did so under the pressure of circumstances, in a polemical form that does not favor the delicate distinctions of an exceptionally complex theology and practice. In its concern to defend the prerogatives of the priesthood challenged by Lutheranism, the Council insisted on the judicial character and efficacy *ex opere operato* of the priestly intervention.

The Council's long, detailed chapters on the acts of the penitent give abundant proof that it was not losing sight of the interior conditions of Christian repentance. But the problem before the Council was not so much to affirm these conditions, in opposition to a doctrine that was reducing repentance entirely to inward attitudes, as to substitute certain attitudes—such as contrition and a firm purpose of amendment—for certain other unjustified attitudes like sterile faith and terror. The attitudes called for by the Council are those expected of a sinner who is sincerely repentant, and their sincerity is measured by their implied purpose of submitting to the good pleasure of the offended Friend.

After the Council of Trent, the Catholic practice of the sacrament of Penance was governed by a conception hardened by anti-Protestant polemics, and the theology of Penance was essentially a theology of combat. Egged on by their opponents, Catholic theologians became entangled by tactical necessity in the brambles of history. Important works were written by such great theologians as Cardinal Bellarmine, S.J. († 1621), the Oratorian Father Morin († 1659), and the Jesuit Petau († 1652). But it was not until the twentieth century that this science freed itself of polemics and gave us a history of penance in which the knowledge of the Church's primitive discipline furnished elements for universal answers to the attacks from outside the Church, as well as materials for nourishing a practice rejuvenated by its contact with original sources.

II. The Theology of Penance

The limited scope of the *Theology Library* prevents us from elaborating further concerning historical developments. At the end of this chapter the reader will find the titles of several works that can serve as guides for a more thorough study of this kind. We shall now present the theology of Penance, making a particular effort not to leave out of consideration the various aspects that the his-

tory of penitential practice and doctrine has already brought to light.

1. PENANCE IS A CONVERSION

The etymology of the word "penance" is subject to debate. Specialists tell us that the most valid etymology would be one that relates the word *poenitentia* (repentance) to *penitus* (interior). But it makes little difference for our purposes. The meaning of our Christian word "penance" must not be sought according to its etymology, but according to the Greek term of the New Testament that it is meant to translate. Now the Vulgate uses the word *poenitentia* to translate the New Testament term *metanoia*. It is in reference to this *metanoia* that the Christian concept of penance was gradually worked out by the Fathers of the Church. It is in this sense that we, too, must use it.

Metanoia (Μετάνοια) signifies a turning about, a conversion. It is the act of a soul that turns away from evil and returns inwardly to God from whom it had been separated through sin. Thus penance involves a twofold movement: detachment from evil, attachment to God and to the goodness that this reconciliation implies. It is this penance-conversion that was preached by John the Baptist¹ and the Apostles Peter,² Paul,³ and John,⁴ all of them following in the footsteps of the Prophets.⁵

The fact that penance is essentially a spiritual conversion, a spiritual regret, and a spiritual turning about does not signify that it must be devoid of exterior acts or works. But it does signify that penance cannot be defined by acts of this sort. In the movement to penance, external acts logically come in second place, after the interior change of heart. And unless they are inspired by this interior penance, they are not even "acts of penance." That is how we must judge certain applications of the word penance when it designates a work of mortification, fasting, abstinence, a barefooted pilgrimage, an act of asceticism, or a satisfaction.

Penance is not essentially an ascetical practice, or a work of mortification, or a satisfaction. It is an interior and spiritual act,

¹ For St. John the Baptist, see Mt. 11:21-22; Lk. 13:4-5; Lk. 15:7; 16:31; 24:46-47.

² For St. Peter, see Acts 3:19.

³ For St. Paul, see Eph. 4:20-24.

⁴ For St. John, see I Jn. 1:8-10; 2:1.

⁵ See Is. 58:1-7; Jer. 7:1-16; Ezech. 18:30-31; 33:10-11; Joel 2:11-14.

a conversion of the heart. It may well induce mortification, reparation, and a sacramental confession. But all that comes second, even though it may not be of secondary importance. Charity likewise can include the giving of alms, generosity, and exterior mercy, but it cannot be defined by these acts; for charity is first of all and essentially a love.

To sum up, we shall keep in mind that penance, under the Christian dispensation, essentially designates a virtue, or an act of this virtue, which is an inward sorrow for having offended God, the firm purpose to make reparation for the evil of sin, and the will to return to God. In the second place, it designates a sacramental "sign" or rite, in which the Christian's repentance is expressed and finds its efficacy for salvation and forgiveness. Lastly, it designates a satisfaction and various works of mortification that express and stimulate it.

We shall consider this penance (conversion) with reference to God who justifies the penitent sinner, with reference to the sinner who repents, and finally with reference to the sacrament which expresses this penance and comes to its assistance.

(a) *The economy of justification*

We do not need to go over the theology of justification again in this chapter. This subject comes under the treatise on grace, and has already been presented in Volume III of this series, on p. 391 ff. However, we do need to call to mind the principles of this doctrine that find their application in the subject now under discussion.

Justification can be considered from two points of view: actively and passively. Actively, it is the act of God who justifies the sinner, that is, who makes him pass from the state of sin to the state of grace, from the state of enmity to the intercourse of friendship. God, who had been offended, restores the penitent to His good graces. The sinner in disgrace returns to God's favor. Passively, justification designates precisely the act of the sinner who repents of the evil he has done and returns to God. There is a passivity, not with reference to the sinner who is converted, since he is contributing very real efforts of his own, but with reference to God, who changes the heart of the one to whom He gives His grace.

A twofold clarification is called for with regard to the offense and the sin.

We have indicated that the offense in God corresponds to the sin in man. And yet the offense can also be understood in two ways. The active offense is, on the part of the sinner, a refusal to love, an insult to the friendship to which God invites man. The offense is then in the sinner. But the offense, understood passively, is the resentment the offended person feels as a result of this insult. Thus, the attitude of an offended person against his offender is quite the opposite of a sentiment of good will or a gift of grace. To be offended is simultaneously to put out of favor. We likewise see—and this is important—that the offense is situated on a higher plane than the relationships of justice. It hits the offended person directly, and not his goods, his possessions, or even his honor. Restitution cannot be made for an offense by giving the injured person something; an offense cannot be paid for. It is a broken friendship. The offense is wiped out only if the offender gives signs of regret and if the friend is willing to forgive.

The sin that offends God to the point that He withdraws His favor altogether is mortal sin. This is the sin we are principally concerned with here. Venial sin is not a “perfect” sin, if we may use this expression, because it does not turn man completely away from God and does not deprive man of God’s grace or friendship. It is a sin only in the measure in which it is opposed to God, that is to say, only partially. Therefore the doctrine of penance that we are presenting should be applied to venial sin with the difference that befits its definition as a lesser sin.

We do not hesitate to insist upon the fact that offense and sin are to be understood in terms of friendship and not chiefly in terms of justice. There is no justice between God and man, or at least there is only imperfect justice, inasmuch as the partners are incommensurable. But there must be love if even this sort of imperfect justice is to be realized. There is no justice or justification without love. It is a fact that God loves us, that He created us out of love, that He has given the life of His Son for us, that He invites us to be His friends. We are never “even” with Him, we are never “just,” as long as we do not love Him as much as we can, and as long as we have not determined to make reparation for our offenses.

God’s forgiveness is efficacious

It is already evident from all that we have just said that there is a close bond between God’s favor and man’s justice on the one

hand, and between offense in God and sin in man on the other. But we must insist further upon it.

Indeed, nothing could be more contrary to Scripture and to our faith than the Lutheran theory of non-imputation or forensic justification. We know that according to this theory God "declares" that a man is saved, and that suffices for the salvation of the man without requiring any change in him. Thus the sinner remains in his sins and his indigence. All that is required of him is a certain sentiment of faith assuring him that God, by virtue of Christ's merits, does not "impute" his sins to him. But this view does not agree with the realism of the prophetic words of the Old Covenant, and it agrees even less with the realism of the New Testament. In Ezechiel, God proclaims:

Because I have broken their heart that was faithless, and revolted from Me,
And their eyes that went fornicating after their idols:
And they shall be displeased with themselves
Because of the evils which they have committed . . . (Ezech. 6:9).

And David sings in the *Miserere*:

A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit:
A contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise (Ps. 50:19).

In the Book of Isaias God speaks to the "hardhearted, who are far from justice" (46:11). And in Ezechiel and Baruch, He announces justification in these terms:

And I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness, . . .

And I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you:

And I will take away the *stony heart* out of your flesh . . . (Ezech. 36:25-26).

And they shall turn away themselves from their stiff neck,
And from their wicked deeds (Bar. 2:33).

As for the New Testament, let us merely mention here the profoundly realistic texts that speak of "new birth," the "new man," the "new creature." All these expressions would be meaningless and Christian life would be nothing but a travesty if a true justice were not possible, that is, a justice that excludes evil and is adorned with authentic virtues.

When we say that God restores His friendship to the penitent sinner, that He justifies and forgives him, that He remits his sins,

we are saying equivalently that God is transforming him in some way. God does not change. All the changes of attitude between God and His creature signify a real change in the creature but not in the Creator. If God restores His friendship to the penitent, it is because He is creating in the penitent something that was no longer there and that we call grace. "Grace" understood as a favor from God must be accompanied by "grace" understood as a gift received by the creature.

Thus the notions of grace, forgiveness, and friendship have a unique and privileged meaning when they are applied to God. God, by the simple fact that He is God, cannot forgive the way man forgives. A man can forgive another who harbors evil intentions against him. He has merely to forget, not to look or not to want to look at his enemy. He has merely to turn away from him. Forgiveness is always painful to him, precisely because he has to change himself, to make an about-face, and because in making this about-face, in renouncing his enmity, he does not have the power to change the heart of the one who offended him. His forgiveness is generous, but it is limited. It restores no true order, no peace. It consists simply in that the one who forgives renounces his anger and his resentment, in that he no longer has any intention of avenging himself.

God does not forgive that way. He cannot, because He cannot change Himself: *Ego Deus et non mutor* (Mal. 3:6). His forgiveness consists in changing the heart of a sinner, of an offender, and making of him a friend who has freely returned to his Savior. God's forgiveness does not let the evil or the offense subsist. He re-establishes an order of true harmony and peace, not by changing His own ever-benevolent will, but by changing the will of the sinner.

This doctrine, so firmly established in Scripture, cannot be contradicted. It signifies that by whatever means God forgives, whether they be sacramental or no, there is always conformity between His forgiveness and the gift of His grace, between the favor He grants and the sinner's conversion. The act of God that justifies and the act of the sinner in process of conversion are bound up as cause to effect, somewhat like the sun and the light of day. If the sun is up, then it is day; and inversely, if it is day it is because the sun is up. Similarly, if the sinner regrets his sin it is because he has received grace from his forgiving God.

Contrition wipes out sin

Let us immediately draw an important corollary from this principle. If it is true that no sin is wiped out without the reception of a corresponding grace, and that no grace is given without conversion, it can also be said that contrition, that is, the friend's sorrow over having offended his God, wipes out sin. As St. Peter tells us, "Charity covers a multitude of sins" (I Pet. 4:8). The soul that regrets its sin and sincerely turns to God cannot remain in disgrace, since this regret in itself is an effect of grace within it. David had only to say: "I have sinned" (II Kgs. 12:13), to hear the words: "The Lord hath taken away thy sin." And St. Augustine commented on this passage: "So great is the power of these three syllables! For indeed they are only three syllables: *Pec-ca-vi*. But in these three syllables the flame of the heart's sacrifice rises up to heaven."⁶

Now while repentance is the effect of grace, it is also the fruit of the will changed by this grace, but a will that has changed freely, that is freely active. Grace cannot do without the will's cooperation. That is why the sacred writer can say that "the Lord beholdeth the heart" (I Kgs. 16:7), and that He forgives the contrite sinner. The fact that God has the initiative does not eliminate the necessity of man's free cooperation: "Convert me, and I shall be converted, for Thou art the Lord my God. For after Thou didst convert me, I did penance" (Jer. 31:18-19). The absolute primacy of God's action does not invalidate the precept: "Bring forth therefore fruits begetting repentance" (Lk. 3:8). St. Peter's words: "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19) can be translated by this formula: Contrition wipes out sin.

Let us not yet inquire as to the role of the sacrament in this doctrine. We shall come to that. Let us merely remember that the sacrament is situated in the order of the *means* of grace. The sacramental organization cannot change anything relating to the end it is meant to serve, and this end may be summed up as consisting in the sinner's forgiveness and the spiritual economy of his conversion. It would be wise to remember this.

Let us not try to translate this doctrine at once into rules of

⁶ *Sermo* 392. For the French translation of this passage, see H. Dondaine, "La Contrition," article published in *L'Eglise et le pécheur* (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 2nd. ed., 1948), p. 43.

action. For the moment, we are trying to establish our certitudes: the grace of God and the conversion that corresponds to it in the sinner's heart wipe out sin. We can joyfully affirm such propositions because they are dictated to us by our faith. They do not signify that we can always affirm in a particular case: (a) there is conversion in this instance (and hence there is grace); or (b) there is grace in this instance (and hence there is regret).

The pastor's judgment or the penitent's action must take into account the theological principles that we have just elaborated, but both the pastor and the penitent are obliged to put these principles to work on a level where, as we shall see, certitude changes its tonality.

(b) *The interior process of repentance*

Let us now study the act of the man who does penance, that is, who is converted or repents: what is the cause of this act, its motive, its nature, and the virtue from which it proceeds?

Faith, Fear, Charity, Repentance

The first principle of all acts of penance is the operation by which God turns the heart back to Himself. In the work of our salvation, God always has the initiative: "Convert me, Lord, and I shall be converted" (Jer. 31:18). Let us simply remember that while God's initiative causes our first act of charity, this initiative is translated by what we call "an operating grace" (see Vol. III, *Theology Library*, pp. 383-384). In fact, there must be a foundation stone, a point of departure for our good intention. Operating grace permits us to make this transition, which is beyond our natural power, from the state of sin to the state of charity. If, on the contrary, God's initiative encounters in us pre-existing grace and good will, then His initiative is translated by what we call "cooperating grace." Such is the case, for example, when the penitent sinner wants to make reparation for the consequences of his sins, or when he repents for a venial sin.

What transpires in man's heart under the motion of God? First of all, in the very act of touching man's heart God turns it back toward Himself. We have said that God's forgiveness does not consist simply in not looking at His enemy, in not "imputing" his sin to him, but in changing his heart, in bringing man back to Himself. God's forgiveness effects repentance. The first act of the penitent

will thus be an adherence of faith, in the name of which he will turn away from the evil he has done and return to God. He recognizes that God is good, that God offers him His forgiveness and that his Savior has expiated for all sins on the Cross. He sees that he has offended God by sinning. Then he wants to make reparation in union with his Savior, by accepting all His conditions. That is his second movement.

Now the sinner's progress toward God may be slow, and God may first attract him with the bait of very human motives: the ugliness of his acts, disgust for the life he is leading, a certain fear of death, fear of the punishments of hell, a desire for a better life, for real happiness. These are possible stages in a progress that is not yet sustained by sanctifying grace. The sinner may stop short of the goal. Or he may at last make an act of strong faith, accompanied by an act of repentance: My God, I have sinned! If he does, this is the decisive stage for him. Under the motion of grace, the contrite sinner has passed into God's friendship.

It does not really matter that he still has a grievous fear of God's punishments, and is disgusted with his own acts even when compared with those of a simply human and respectable life. These sentiments are not incompatible with filial fear, the fear of the prodigal son who has just realized his weakness and fears nothing so much now as to be separated from his father. And then too, love of God can cohabit with a fear of hell that does not proceed chiefly from love of self.

The point we want to stress here is that repentance cannot be virtuous if it remains principally in the sensibilities. Repentance is not a sorrow that is "felt" but a voluntary detestation of a wrong committed, and the resolve to make reparation for its consequences. When the penitent freely and voluntarily turns against his sin, he may experience a "feeling" of sadness and sorrow. A certain shame over his sin may even predispose his free will and decide him to be converted. The sinner may feel inwardly burned, mortified, by the evil he has committed. His remorse may be poignant. None of these sentiments should be scorned or neglected. It can be just as pharisaical to "feel" no sorrow for grave sins as to be too easily moved to tears. It is altogether normal that a fervent detestation by the will should lead to a "felt" displeasure. And yet, precious as this reaction of the feelings may be, either to sweep the will along in its wake or to express this will in a human way and make it more

fervent, repentance is not essentially in the "feelings." It is in the will, that is, in the spirit. The only virtuous repentance is the repentance of the heart, that is, the repentance of that part of us that is most completely ourselves, that is most profoundly involved when a person says: "I." And this is his spirit.

We may ask ourselves what is added to the simple virtue of charity by this voluntary hatred of evil which characterizes the virtue of penance. Actually, penance is rooted in charity, and there is no efficacious penance without charity. Concomitantly, love of goodness which charity inspires is inseparable from hatred of evil and all sin. But penance does not set out simply to hate evil (i.e., the only real evil, sin) in general. It is opposed to a specific evil that the sinner has committed, and for which he is determined to make reparation. This reprobation not of sin in general but of a specific sin committed, and this resolve to wipe out the consequences of this specific sin provide the legitimate basis for a special virtue whose name is "penance" and which the charity of the converted sinner cannot leave unused.

Let us sum up these exploratory considerations by quoting the beautiful text of St. Thomas that analyzes the acts of a soul that, under the effect of God's operation, turns away from sin and returns to God:

. . . with regard to the acts whereby in penance we cooperate with God operating, the first principle . . . is the operation of God in turning the heart, according to Lament. 5:21: "Convert us, O Lord, to Thee, and we shall be converted"; the second, an act of faith; the third, a movement of servile fear, whereby a man is withdrawn from sin through fear of punishment; the fourth, a movement of hope, whereby a man makes a purpose of amendment, in the hope of obtaining pardon; the fifth, a movement of charity, whereby sin is displeasing to man for its own sake and no longer for the sake of the punishment; the sixth, a movement of filial fear whereby a man, of his own accord, offers to make amends to God through fear of Him.

Accordingly it is evident that the act of penance results from servile fear as from the first movement of the appetite in this direction and from filial fear as from its immediate and proper principle (Summa, IIIa, q. 85, a. 5, c).

This outline does not set forth an order of temporal succession. St. Thomas is establishing an order of logical succession justified by the nature and role of the acts considered. But it can happen existentially that these acts, or certain ones of them, are simultaneous. The analysis here made does not prejudice the concrete history of conversions that can be rapid as lightning, as in the case of

St. Paul, or more laborious, as in the case of St. Augustine. It simply indicates the stages that the penitent soul must pass through.

When penance is ripe, then true contrition—i.e., the contrition that has been “perfected” by charity—springs from the sinner’s heart, and God forgives him. According to Father Dondaine’s apt formula, which translates the words of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, forgiveness “is granted in the very instant that fully formed contrition springs from the soul.”⁷ The “form” of penance, as of every virtue, is charity.

Contrition and Attrition

Before contrition is formed, there may exist a certain repentance in the soul. This repentance does not proceed from grace and is not inspired by charity. To distinguish this sentiment from contrition, which is repentance perfected by charity, traditional theology calls it “attrition.” It is an imperfect regret that does not have the power to wipe out sin or to restore the soul to God’s friendship. But it can be a providential path for leading the sinner to grace and to contrition. We have already said that servile fear has the same relation to filial fear as the imperfect to the perfect. Certain motives of servile fear can even remain in the penitent’s soul together with motives of filial fear, but these servile motives are not the principal ones.

This doctrine has taken on vast importance since the attritionist and contritionist quarrels of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Nominalist theology affirmed the adequacy of attrition for justification, providing it was accompanied by the sacrament. It thus introduced the famous “two ways of forgiveness,” the way of contrition without the sacrament and the way of attrition with the sacrament. This amounted to confusing the *nature* of justification and the elements through which it is put into operation (grace, contrition, . . .) on the one hand and the *means* instituted by Christ to attain justification on the other. Our whole analysis is situated on the level of natures. The means used, whatever they may be, change nothing of the nature of penance. How could attrition alone subsist in a justified soul, since attrition by definition is totally devoid of charity? How could grace make the sinner good and “just,” the son and friend of God, and still allow him to love himself more

⁷ “Théologie de la contrition,” in *L’Église et le pécheur* (Paris, Cerf, 1948), p. 45.

than he loves God and to be opposed to God? No matter what exterior sign is "added to" the soul's state, God's grace and/or His forgiveness cannot fail to make us good and just.

Since this quarrel, theologians have been drawn onto a new terrain of discussion that deserves our attention.

For the theologians of the thirteenth century, contrition and attrition were defined by their principles and their effects. These principles and effects were as follows: Contrition is the perfect act of repentance, the one that makes grace ripen and that is inspired by charity. It is also the act of the free will that corresponds to the moment of justification. In "justifying" the sinner, God causes him to turn away freely from his sins and adhere with complete freedom to his Savior. Attrition on the contrary is by definition an imperfect regret. It is the repentance the sinner can have before the instant of justification, that is, before the infusion of grace and the first interior movement of charity. It is a repentance still inspired by love of self, perhaps by shame, disgust with sin, and fear of eternal punishment. But whatever the motives, they never dispense the sinner from rising up to true contrition, which alone transforms the sinner, the enemy of God, into God's freely converted friend.

These principles are clear and simple. They were lost sight of when the debates over the Scotist position were fought on a purely psychological terrain. Then there were efforts to give rigorous definitions of the "contents of conscience," interior attitudes, secret motives, and lifelike "cases" of contrition and attrition. A casuistic approach was developed which enlarged upon the "difficulties" of contrition to the point of making it a rare and heroic act, a sort of exceptional grace after the manner of a charism. The very name of "perfect contrition" came to be looked upon as an exception and as a psychologically superhuman act. On the contrary attrition came to be looked upon as the ordinary regret, the only kind of which the common run of mortals were capable. Paradoxically certain attritionists, with their complicated casuistry, ended by being more severe than the traditional contritionists. Luther, who held that man can contribute nothing good, found it easy to jeer even at attrition.

What made perfect contrition still more "impossible" was the commonly professed error concerning the contents of man's love of God. This love, so it was claimed, had to be pure of all desires

and all delight. For the ancients, charity implied the inseparability of the two acts of desire and benevolence. Thus they noted that charity could not help willing its own good when it willed the good and the happiness of others. If we think it over carefully, the "desire for hell" together with all it implies in the way of eternal enmity against God and souls, is impossible for charity, even for "the salvation of many souls." The love of desire, which may motivate the repentance of fear, can also imply the benevolence of charity and may cohabit with true contrition. As we have already pointed out, true contrition can be compatible with certain motives of initial fear.

Scotus and Suarez broke up this traditionally recognized unity in the love of charity. "For them, the desire for God was no more than a hope, inasmuch as they considered charity to be the pure love of disinterested benevolence. Thenceforth, desire and benevolence were separable and were to motivate two specifically different types of repentance: attrition, motivated by fear and by the love of hope; and secondly, contrition, motivated by the love of benevolence or charity."⁸ These views led to a state of complete confusion: thenceforth charity was no longer the integral charity composed indissolubly of desire and benevolence; and the "love of hope," now placed *outside the bounds of "charity,"* would be sufficient to receive grace. Attrition and contrition were no longer juxtaposed as the imperfect to the perfect, by virtue of their basic principles, but were considered as "two contents of conscience, two psychological species."⁹

The psychological era into which theology had entered in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries does not deserve criticism in itself, and it goes without saying that this is not what we are condemning here. We are simply condemning two errors: first, the error that we have just pointed out, concerning the love of charity and consequently the repentance of contrition; and second, an abuse of casuistry and an excessive desire to know the penitent's real motives. Let us clarify this last point.

It is quite clear that the infusion of grace and the concomitant advent of charity into a soul cannot fail to be "without repercussions in its act; for it is impossible to change one's end without a

⁸ H. Dondaine, *Bulletin de théologie*: "la pénitence," in *Revue des Sc. Phil. et Theol.*, 1952, No. 4, p. 670.

⁹ *Ibid.*

personal act.”¹⁰ We must beware of images that sometimes compare the “stains” of the soul to those on a beautiful white dress, or to dust on a windowpane. It is possible to remove the stains from a dress and the dust from a windowpane without the need of any intrinsic change or movement in either of them. The same is not true of the soul. The soul’s stains are evil intentions, evil inclinations, bad habits. A pure heart is not one that no longer moves or that is externally preserved from all blemish. It is a living and strong heart, capable as never before of love, self-forgetfulness, and self-giving.

Penance is not meant to destroy the sinner’s love of life, nor to reduce it to the condition of a “well-behaved child” that does not move so as not to get dirty. On the contrary, penance is meant to give life, the life of grace that is the fullness of life. It is absolutely false, therefore, to think that grace can in some way fall into the soul without any interior change in the soul. That would be a kind of “magic.” Just as the life of a newborn child finds expression through his cries, so the gift of grace produces an immediate reaction in the soul, a movement of living faith.

But it is an error likewise to claim one can be absolutely sure of this “passage” in which the soul passes from death to life, and to believe that one can always measure the psychological density of the act that corresponds to the infusion of faith. For here we are entering the profound mystery of the soul’s relationships with God. It belongs only to God to make rigorous diagnosis in this area, for His word extends “even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints also and of marrow, and a discernor of the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb. 4:12).

Are we to say that diagnostics are impossible, that the penitent must not seek to be contrite since he cannot know when he really is; and that the pastor has nothing to say to him since he does not search the reins or the hearts of men? Not at all. Whatever we have said of the economy of our justification and of our repentance, we have said in the name of our faith. And our knowledge is well-founded. We do not hesitate to affirm the intimate bond between justification and contrition. However, whatever we know about the soul of our neighbor or about our own soul, we know only through experience or through signs. Hence our knowledge of souls is less

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

certain. We cannot make affirmations without a certain fear of error.

But in the knowledge of souls, it is useless to want another type of vision. Knowledge through signs is all that we can and need to obtain. It suffices for the pastor's diagnostics, for his judgment, and for the advice he may give, just as it suffices for the penitent when he makes his decisions and resolutions. We are dealing with two types of knowledge, which we might call theoretical and experimental. It is an error to want to reduce experimental knowledge to theoretical knowledge, or on the other hand to misunderstand the nature of the latter to the point of dictating rules of action to a pastor that do not stem from established principles of theology.

Let us make it clear once for all that rules of action must be inspired by a previously established theology of justification and conversion; but these rules must take into account the fact that it is only through signs that we can know the "contents of conscience" that correspond to justification and contrition. It will be to the best advantage of pastors to be good psychologists and pedagogues (even though they must first of all be good theologians). Casuists can analyze cases of repentance as meticulously as they please, and yet neither pastors nor casuists can rid themselves of the imperfect knowledge that is our lot as long as we do not see God face to face and men's souls in Him. But this practical knowledge ordinarily suffices—*salvo meliori judicio*—to discern an absence of regret, a beginning of repentance to be encouraged, or a case of true contrition.

(c) *The sacramental economy*

Let us now pass from the consideration of the *nature* and *acts* of justification to a consideration of its *means*. All that we have said so far is and remains true. We must now see how this Biblical economy of justification—especially St. Paul's and St. John's—fits in with the sacramental economy of penance.

A sacramental virtue

We cannot return to God unless God takes the initiative in showing His mercy to us. Now God has already taken this initiative with regard to the human race as a whole. And we have seen that in the present economy of salvation there is no penance without faith in Christ who wipes out the sins of the world with His blood.

We shall now add: There is no penance without a sacramental confession, or at least without the intention to make a confession.

Indeed, God's grace is not bound to exterior repentance, or to any particular "means." Divine forgiveness does not coincide with the expression of repentance but with the contrition that the soul inwardly conceives. But God, who is our pedagogue and re-educator, has willed for our welfare that we should go through this exterior confession. "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (Jn. 20:23). There is no reason to assume that this command applied only to the remission of sins that takes place in Baptism. The Apostles and their successors were also given power to absolve the sins of baptized persons, and that is how the Church, guided by the Spirit, has understood the Lord's words. According to Tertullian (*De paen.*, 4), the originator of a long tradition, the ship of salvation had been given to Adam and Eve in the state of innocence. After the loss of this ship, the first plank of salvation given to men was Baptism, and Penance was the second.

When Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance, He was not introducing a complete innovation. His institution conforms so well to both our spiritual and emotional nature, it is so well suited to the condition of those who are often unable to conceive in their hearts anything that they have not taken the trouble to express, that it might well seem to be a natural institution. And we might well expect to find precedents for it not only in the Old Law but in the history of all religions. Was not the sin offering commanded by the law of Moses (Lev. 4 and 5) an indirect way of confessing to the priest? In every epoch sinful man has surrounded his penance by external acts. It is also interesting to note that even the present-day religious revival among the Anglicans, as well as among the Reformed sects,¹¹ has brought both groups to a more habitual practice or to a rediscovery of confession.

Christ has thus entrusted His power of forgiveness to the keys of the Church. This is a fact. How could the sinner sincerely regret his sin and desire to regain his Savior's grace, if he refused to submit to the good pleasure of his divine Friend, and drink from the spring of forgiveness He established? Just as there is no confession (means) that can dispense with true contrition (end), so there is no Christian contrition unaccompanied by the intention to confess

¹¹ See Max Thurian, *La confession* (Neuchâtel, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1953).

one's sins. Since the repentance that wipes out sin is the one by which the soul, in regaining God's friendship, submits to His good pleasure, we must say concretely that, in the present economy of salvation, the repentance that wipes out sin is also the one that is accompanied by the intention to go to confession. St. Thomas declares: "There can be no true contrition, regardless of the sorrow over the sin committed, without the intention to submit to the keys of the Church."¹² And this intention gives all regret, inward as it may be, a sacramental value. Through this intention the sacrament begins to produce its fruits in the penitent's heart.

The principle that every penitent must submit to the keys of the Church cannot be brought into question under the pretext that sometimes the sinner cannot go to confession. The intention already present in his heart is efficacious submission. And while this intention is ordinarily proven by the action that terminates it, it is no less a real intention if the sinner is unable to go to confession because he is dying or in prison. If he could, he would go to confession. That suffices to make his intention authentic and efficacious to link his contrition to the power of the keys. In other words, it suffices to make his contrition sacramental.

This necessary link between the interior act of contrition and the exterior steps taken by the penitent causes uneasiness to certain persons. Being unconsciously Pelagians, they imagine they are always masters of their interior acts and that they always have the power to be contrite. They realize that confession can be an expression of their repentance, but they do not see just how they need it and they look upon it as a sort of insult to their spiritual liberty. They would not mind so much if the sacrament "replaced" contrition (which, as we have seen, signifies nothing). But when it is brought home to them that they must be contrite under any condition, then they do not see how an act that they consider solely as a nuisance can have value as a "means."

But confession is useful to the sinner precisely because he must be contrite and have a change of heart. If God's forgiveness were only a "declaration of forgiveness," like the forgiveness of a man, if the Savior were content to say that He did not "impute" the sin, it would suffice to assure the sinner that this declaration has been made to him once and for all. Inasmuch as the forgiveness would

¹² *Quodlibet* 4, a. 10 ad 3.

require no regret, no shame on the sinner's part, why should such a procedure be imposed upon him?

The question is in fact quite a different one! Here is a man who did wrong and who now wills the good, a prodigal son who had left his Father's house, turned away from Him, and now wants only to live in His friendship. Such a change of heart is not in man's power unless God helps him. God comes to his rescue. He became man to come and seek the sinner. He calls him by his name, as He did Matthew; He reveals his soul to him, as He did to the Samaritan woman; He allows Himself to be seen and touched, as He did for Thomas. Or if He withdraws His visible presence, He deals with the sinner through the signs of His presence, His words, His ministers, and His sacraments. Indeed, grace could bring a man to interior repentance without the help of this sacramental means. But it would not then be adapted to our corporeal and spiritual nature, and it would not correspond to the logic of incarnation according to which God saves man by becoming man Himself and by providing him with human helps.

Hence God encourages the change of the sinner's will by offering him visible assistance. He invites man to pledge his faith in Christ the Savior, and to tell his repentance by a gesture that expresses these attitudes or at least timidly begins to express them. And He takes advantage of this process, which conforms so well with our nature, to "accomplish" the conversion of this penitent heart.

"Show me thy faith without works," says St. James, "and I from my works will show thee my faith!" (Jas. 2:18). We might paraphrase these words and apply them to penance as follows: "Show me your contrition, if you are unable to pledge it in this exterior action that the Friend with whom you say you are reconciled asks of you. As for me, it is through my external action that I shall prove to you my conversion and my faith." Let us add, however, that the profession of faith made in the sacrament is inwardly taken over by Christ and used by Him to "accomplish" our repentance. There is question here not only of a profession of faith and of repentance, but also of an operation by Christ who stirs up our heart by offering it the ministry of His mercy.

These long explanations will at least make us understand how the Christian virtue of penance is also in some respect a sacramental virtue. The confession of sin stems at once from the virtue

and from the sacrament of Penance, but it is none the less essential. Whether this confession is actually expressed in words or is merely an intention, it always accompanies Christian contrition.

Absolution and contrition wipe out sin.

Let us confront this doctrine with the "absolutionist" and "contritionist" views which we hold to be in error. This will allow us to clarify the relationship between contrition and the sacrament of Penance.

According to the absolutionists, the remission of sin derives from absolution alone, to the exclusion of the penitent's acts. But if it is true that the grace of God does not save us without our cooperation, this theory cannot be defended. For it separates two acts which are existentially joined together and perfectly united, namely, God's forgiveness and the sinner's contrition—or to speak more generally, the infusion of grace and the interior quickening of the soul. Absolution is not a magic word that falls upon the sinner and removes his sins without his having to perform the slightest act of repentance and without his having to desist from his hatred and enmity against God.

The contritionists, on the contrary, according to the caricature of them painted by certain of their adversaries, hold that the remission of sins is the effect of contrition and nothing else. But even admitting that this contrition is sacramental by reason of its being ordered to confession, what place would then be given to the priest's absolution?

Thus, we say on the one hand: absolution remits sins; and on the other: contrition remits sins. The truth is that these two affirmations must be made *together*. To defend the first proposition to the exclusion of the second, or vice versa, would be mutilating the truth of the mystery of penance. The theologian's task is precisely to organize these elements so that none of the complex truth of the sacrament is neglected.

The sacrament is constituted not by absolution alone, nor by the penitent's confession alone, but by both at once. The absolution plays the role of form (see *Lexicon*), and repentance expressed by the sinner plays the role of *quasi-matter* (see *ibid.*). It goes without saying that the philosophical categories of matter and form are here taken in a special sense. They were not elaborated to translate a particular mystery, and theology makes use of them without any

illusions as to what they really signify. They do not mean that the penitent's act and the priest's absolution form a single physical being, but that together and indivisibly they form the single sacramental instrument which Christ uses to forgive the sinner, absolution having the principal role but having no effect without concomitant contrition.

Thus does the Christian economy bring human actions within the context of sacramental influence. The sinner's penance is to the sacrament of forgiveness what water is to Baptism and what bread and wine are to the Eucharist. It is admirably suited to a sacrament of healing. Since Baptism is a generation, it is fitting that the person being baptized be merely receptive and willing; for the first gift of life does not presuppose an anterior act of collaboration. Since healing, on the contrary, always requires nature's cooperation, it is fitting that the sacrament of healing should express the penitent's collaboration in its rite.

Let us clearly grasp the difference this establishes between Penance and the other sacraments (with the exception of Matrimony). The other sacraments demand that the subject be well *disposed* to receive the sacrament, but they do not raise his acts to the level of efficacious instruments of grace, or at least to the level of being the *matter* of this instrument. In Penance, on the contrary, regret is not only a condition for receiving this sacrament validly and for not preventing its reception (if it were only that, it would be no different from the catechumen's faith or the communicant's desire for charity); regret is the matter of the sacrament of Penance, and hence a necessary element for constituting the sacrament. If there is no sin to confess, there can be no absolution or "sacramental" grace. The condition is always extrinsic to the effect produced: a door must be open for a procession to pass through it. The matter is intrinsic to the cause: there is no procession without human beings.

Contrition is raised to the rank of an instrument of grace not simply as repentance, but as repentance ordered to sacramental confession. If God makes use of the penitent's acts, if He invites him to come and express his regret to the minister of the keys, it is not because God needs such a gesture. Even the contrition that operates in the sacrament is inwardly stirred up by God.

Throughout the process of justification, and sometimes long before, God is at work in man's heart. He makes countless advances,

The works of the last ten years of Rembrandt's life—St. Matthew (The Louvre), The Jewish Fiancée (Amsterdam), his Return of the Prodigal Son (The Hermitage, Leningrad)—are, as it were, the supreme pages of his art in which he surrenders to us the utmost depths of his interior vision of the world and of beings. This painting was done in 1668, and he died in 1669.

Let us bear in mind Rembrandt's invincible fidelity to light, not only to the irradiating light that confers a mystery of intimacy on the characters in his paintings, but to that interior light that gives supernatural brightness to the natural light. Evidently, Rembrandt's religion was weakened by his narrow Protestantism that repudiated all dogma and venerated only a consoling Christ, gentle to the afflicted, and kindly to the oppressed and the wretched. His portrayals of Christ in the "Descent from the Cross" and the "Traveler of Emmaus" lack the divine majesty that should shine through the countenance of the Son of Man. But nothing seems lacking in this scene of the return of the Prodigal Son to depict to us the father's merciful welcome of his child who has finally come back.

The son's knees are bent by repentance, and a sentiment of humble trust bows the sinner's head on his father's breast. But we would be betraying Rembrandt's thought—and our Lord's even more—if we paused too long over the son. It is on the father's face and hands that the light streams. That is where we must look to read the mystery of Mercy. The hands rest on the son's shoulders in a gesture that is one of benediction and protection. They do not grip or restrain; they cover over: in both senses of the word.

The radiance of the light makes us commune in the emotion that unites these two souls in an ineffable embrace.

The Return of the Prodigal Son by Rembrandt (1668).



He makes certain acts odious to him, and makes certain good acts attractive. And since this man has been baptized, He reminds him of His Son's Cross, which is the source of his forgiveness; and He reminds him of the sacrament of Christ's blood that He instituted for him. And then the work of God advances mysteriously in man's heart: a sacrament of forgiveness is within his reach, toward which he is already moving and which in consequence is invisibly operating within him. From that very moment his acts count sacramentally; they cooperate in his cure until his contrition is fully formed and he has decided to present himself to Christ's minister. Then God completes all that He has begun by means of the sacrament that He instituted.

This sacramental economy that applies to every conversion is still more easily understood if the sinner has only venial sins to abjure. In this case, he collaborates in his cure from the start, since he possesses grace, the principle of all renewal.

It might be thought that God could just as well bring about the sinner's repentance by asking him to confess to any baptized person whatever. In actual fact, God is free in His choice of means. But man is not free to change the sacraments that Christ has instituted, nor is the Christian layman free to modify certain rites that the Church has been given the power to determine. The Church has received the power to remit and retain sins. She is free to determine the rite of reconciliation, as she has done in so many ways through the centuries. It is not even sure that the practice of "confession to laymen" was not recognized by the Church during certain epochs.¹⁴ But in the present state of the rite, the penitent is bound by faith to the passion of Christ only through the minister that the Church presents to him and who is always a priest. Faith cannot suggest to the faithful any minister of forgiveness other than the one the Church offers him. In other words, Christ's blood acts efficaciously in him only through the means of the minister that the Lord has chosen for Himself and whom He is presently using, namely the priest.

It may happen that a priest is not available or that it is impossible to go to him. In that case, although there is no obligation to do so, it is permissible to confess to a layman (bound to secrecy) who is willing to relay the confession to a priest. Thus will be safe-

¹⁴ Cf. P. Teetaert, *La confession aux laïcs dans l'Église latine depuis le VII^e jusqu'au XIV^e s.* (Louvain, 1926).

guarded the bond between the power of Orders and the Passion of Christ. And even if it is impossible for the layman to transmit the confession to a priest (for example when one dying man confesses to another dying man on the battlefield), it seems that such a confession, although in no sense sacramental, is to be recommended¹⁵ and is in the spirit of the sacramental institution. Christ, who is close to every man's heart, can if He so wills effect through this communication, or on the occasion of this communication, what He normally effects through the sacrament. In any event this proves that the principal element in the sacrament is neither the confession nor the satisfaction, but the contrition that finds expression in confession and submits to the judgment of the minister of the keys. While Christ wants to accept our regret in a social rite of reconciliation, it is in the depths of our heart that He invisibly nourishes, perfects, and encourages this regret every time it is possible for us to present ourselves to a priest.

Concerning adequate attrition: three positions

We can apply all that we have said to the so-called problem of "adequate attrition."

We have already defined attrition as an imperfect repentance that is not yet rooted in and nourished by grace; a repentance in progress toward contrition, and not a termination point.

Now St. Thomas has written a sentence in his *Commentary on the Sentences* that is subject to ambiguous interpretation and has given rise to vehement debates. This is what he said: "If anyone goes to confession with only attrition and not full contrition, he will receive the grace and the remission of his sins in his confession and the absolution that is given him, providing he places no obstacle in the way."¹⁶

Certain theologians, heirs to the Scotist school, use the above text as the basis for the following assertion: There are two paths of forgiveness: one is difficult, the path of "perfect contrition" outside the sacrament; the other is merciful, the path of attrition,

¹⁵ Such is the opinion of St. Thomas Aquinas, at least. It should however be noted that this is no longer the custom. The "*consuetudines Ecclesiae*" are also a theological locus. Such a "confession" would be only an external proof of repentance.

¹⁶ "Quando aliquis accedit ad confessionem attritus, non plene contritus, si obicem non ponat, in ipsa confessione et absolutione sibi gratia et remissio peccatorum datur." (*IV Sent. Dist. 22, 9, 2, a. 1, ga. 3*).

which, united to the sacrament, would suffice for justification. We shall not give further attention to this thesis, since we have already shown its theological absurdity. Let us simply sum up our views by saying that the economy of our justification, which is the economy of the interior divine and human acts that cooperate in our salvation, cannot be "added to" the sacrament which is a sign and a means. These are two distinct realities, each belonging to a different genus. Contrition remains necessary for forgiveness, regardless of the rite that supports it and gives it expression.

To the mind of a second group of theologians, the following is the correct doctrine: On the one hand, it is understood that divine forgiveness coincides with contrition in the soul, and that both the forgiveness and the contrition wipe out sins, though in different ways. But even though the theologian who speaks in absolute terms of his faith can joyfully set forth this certitude, the same is not true of the penitent's psychology or of the priest's pastoral guidance. How can a sinner be sure that his regret is sufficient? How can the priest judge: this repentance is true contrition, inspired by charity? That is why the theologians deem it necessary to give the penitent and the priest practical and reliable rules of action that are not intangible truths of theology. Although these doctors are Thomists in theology, they are Scotists in pastoral matters; and in the end they include in forgiveness a "content of conscience" that consists entirely of "motives" of attrition. Or else they are *tutorists* and demand more than the sin would indicate. What they consider to be the "theoretical" division among theologians does not disturb them in "practice."

We cannot accept this dichotomy between theory and pastoral guidance, between theology and action, as if theology did not regulate action, even the contingent, singular, and complex aspects of action. If theology did not regulate action, what purpose would it serve for pastors to study it? On the contrary, we believe that the light of theology is more than ever necessary when action is obscure.

On the other hand we know that this thesis of division has some truth in it: namely, that we do not grasp the truths of faith and theology and the good or evil dispositions of man's heart with the same kinds of knowledge. And yet just because we know man's interior acts only imperfectly, is no reason why we should fail to apply the rules of our faith to these acts in the measure that we know them.

The "certitude" of such a knowledge of man's heart is not of the same sort as the "certainty" of seeing a specific color or of touching this particular piece of wood. This latter sort of certainty has no place among the secret and mysterious relationships between the soul and God, and God does not ask for such certainty. There are casuistic intricacies in this matter that are pure religious nonsense. But the thing God does ask, and because of which He has not disdained a social rite, is that the penitent know himself through the simple and direct experience that every man can have of his own heart. He also asks that the priest seek to know what a man, and not God, can know of another man who forthrightly opens his heart to him.

We therefore think we should interpret St. Thomas' sentence to mean this: If someone comes to the sacrament of penance with only attrition and not full contrition in his heart, his sincere attrition, inclining toward contrition since he is placing no obstacle in the way, will culminate in contrition through the power of divine forgiveness which acts in the sacramental rite of confession and absolution. Moreover we shall cite the following text from the Council of Trent in support of this doctrine:

Contrition, which holds the first place among the aforesaid acts of the penitent, is a sorrow of mind and a detestation for sin committed with the purpose of not sinning in the future. This feeling of contrition was at all times necessary for obtaining the forgiveness of sins and thus indeed it prepares one who has fallen after Baptism for the remission of sins, if it is united with confidence in the divine mercy and with the desire to perform other things that are required to receive this sacrament in the proper manner. . . .

The Council teaches furthermore, that though it happens sometimes that this contrition is perfect through charity and reconciles man to God before this sacrament is actually received, this reconciliation, nevertheless, is not to be ascribed to the contrition itself without a desire of the sacrament, which desire is included in it. As to imperfect contrition, which is called attrition, since it commonly arises either from the consideration of the heinousness of sin or from the fear of hell and of punishment, the Council declares that if it renounces the desire to sin and hopes for pardon, it not only does not make one a hypocrite and a great sinner, but is even a gift of God and an impulse of the Holy Spirit, not indeed as already dwelling in the penitent, but only moving him, with which assistance the penitent prepares a way for himself unto justice. And though without the sacrament of Penance it cannot *per se* lead the sinner to justification, it does, however, dispose him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of penance. For, struck salutarily by this fear, the Ninivites, moved by the dreadful preaching of Jonas, did penance and obtained mercy from the Lord. Falsely therefore do some accuse Catholic writers, as if they maintain that the sacrament of Penance confers grace without any pious exertion on

the part of those receiving it, something that the Church of God has never taught or ever accepted. Falsely also do they assert that contrition is extorted and forced, and not free and voluntary (*Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Session XIV, Chapter 4, translated by H. J. Schroeder, O.P., B. Herder Book Co., 1941, pp. 91-92).

Juridical vocabulary and the sacrament of Penance

Catechetical and theological literature concerning the sacrament of Penance is full of such words as: tribunal, judgment, sanction, reparation, punishment, satisfaction, retribution, etc., which belong to the vocabulary of the law courts. From there it is only a step to thinking that the penitent is a defendant who is tried without a witness or a lawyer, and thereupon "judged" and "punished." Indeed, penitents as well as certain priests often do take this view of the sacrament of Penance.

The truth is that these juridical terms have an entirely new meaning when they are applied to the sacrament of Penance. Before being a legal trial in justice, this sacrament is a reconciliation in friendship. This point is of capital importance and it cannot be too strongly emphasized either in the preparation of the faithful or in pastoral guidance. God loves us, and sin wounds His friendship. Thus the reparation of sin is a much more delicate matter than the reparation of a simple injustice among men.

It is true that our love is also a matter of justice that we owe to God. No man can be called "just" unless he loves. In this sense, juridical terms are legitimately used in the sacrament. While the priest is a "judge," he is also the representative of the Friend, of the One who has been offended and who is reunited to the friend for whom He gave His blood and whom He completely forgives if he is contrite. While satisfaction for sin is a reparation in justice, it is also a privilege granted to the friend in that he is not forgiven without contributing his own personal share. Thus the sinner is granted the mercy of sharing before God the fruits of the blood of Christ so that he may have greater trust in the friendship to which he is once more restored and fewer mental reservations in entering the new life he wants to lead with his Lord.

Therefore if Penance is a tribunal, it is not the tribunal of an ordinary judge, but the tribunal of the supreme judge. In a monarchy, the king is the supreme judge, the one to whom appeal is made as a last resort and from whom mercy is requested. If the penitent presents himself before a judge, this judge is rather a

"king" than the president of an ordinary tribunal, and priests would deserve the name of kings rather than of judges.¹⁷ The case being tried before the tribunal of Penance, moreover, does not concern the public domain as much as the personal and private relations between the King and the penitent.

It is important to remember this and to use this juridical vocabulary with extreme prudence. Juridism, legalism, and the religion of the synagogue are already too strong temptations for many of the faithful and priests, for us to add fuel to the fire. In dealing with children, it is wisest not to present Penance to them as a "tribunal." The essential thing in Penance is the intention to be reinstated in God's friendship and to atone for the wounds inflicted upon this friendship.

2. THE ACTS OF THE PENITENT

Now that we have presented the general structure of the sacrament of Penance, we have yet to consider the specific acts of the penitent and the acts of the priest.

The penitent's acts that contribute to the sacrament are contrition, confession, and satisfaction. These acts make up the *sacramentum*, that is, the visible efficacious sign, or at least the matter of this sign. The *res*, i.e., the grace that corresponds to this sign, is the grace of forgiveness and of friendly reconciliation. The *res et sacramentum*, the intermediary reality that is signified by the sacrament and that also signifies the grace, is the interior virtue of penance which, as we have already said, is "sacramental" because it is ordered to the keys of the Church. It is sacramental, likewise, because it is signified by the confession.

(a) *Contrition*

This is the first and most important of the penitent's acts. The paradox is that it is an interior act not perceptible to the senses, and for this reason it cannot be sacramental. Its sacramental quality comes from its ordination to confession. It concurs with priestly

¹⁷ See P. Charles, "Doctrine et pastorale du sacrement de pénitence," in *Nouvelle revue théologique*, May, 1953, pp. 449-470. An excellent study in which the author distinguishes the domain of the *judge* who applies laws to persons and who condemns or acquits; and the domain of the *supreme magistrate*, king or president, who confronts the defendant person-to-person, and who "grants pardon" by an act of pure benevolence (p. 462). The author also cites the whole tradition of this doctrine.

absolution in bringing the soul remission of its sins. It befits healing, of which this sacrament is the symbol, to be thus obtained both from within and from without.

The word "contrition" comes from the Latin *conterere*, which means to pulverize, to crush. It is spiritual suffering, that is, a displeasure of the will that makes us turn away from past sins with our whole being. Therefore, included in it, is the *will* never to sin again (this does not mean that in fact one will never sin again) and the hope of forgiveness. It is rooted in grace and inspired by charity.

Care must be taken to distinguish this "suffering" in which contrition consists, not only from sensible suffering but also from the simple quasi-instinctive reaction against all that is ugly, shameful, or evil. Contrition does not consist in a shame or fear of being disgraced by committing sin. Such a reaction is a defense against present or future evil. Contrition is grief over sins that have been committed in the past.

However, the beginning of penance is usually a certain fear, and contrition is accompanied by fear. What is this fear? For all fears are not equally good. The "worldly fear" that makes a man ashamed of God and turns him away from God has no place here. "Servile fear" draws us toward God because of our dread of the punishments due to sin. "Initial fear" is already a delicate composite of servile and filial fear.

"Filial fear," the fear of the sons of God, or "chaste fear" which is the fear of souls enamored of Him, is raised still higher by the gift of fear. It makes the soul dread being separated from God or offending Him. It even causes a certain movement of flight from the divine majesty, a movement however that can be reconciled with a deeper union through love.

It is this last-named fear that is given or nourished by the grace of Penance. Obviously it is something very different from the "guilt complex" of which psychologists talk. The guilt complex is something physical, it is a sort of emotion of the flesh. Filial fear is spiritual. It is an emotion of the will in the presence of God. If the soul has enough power over the body to influence it, it can be cured of this "complex," and set the penitent at peace because it sets everything in order within him.

Should acts of contrition be intermittent or continuous? Evidently the exterior acts of contrition—confession, the Confiteor re-

cited before Mass, the Act of Contrition recited in night prayers—must necessarily be intermittent. The same is true of interior acts. But the Gospel's insistence, or that of the Apostles, invites us to something more: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:2); "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19; see also Eph. 4:20-24; I Jn. 1:8-10; 2:11). The virtue of penance, by which we hold to the resolution of detesting our past sins, does in a sense make our penance continuous; and it disposes us not to let a single past sin go unregretted. However, the ancient Fathers and saints did not stop there. In their eagerness to conform more perfectly with the Gospel and to root repentance more deeply in their souls, they practiced a rather special type of virtue known as compunction.

Compunction is the state of a soul that feels goaded from all sides, inwardly burned by the grief caused by its past sins, weaknesses, base actions, and the remoteness from God in which it continues to remain. Compunction is such a state of soul, and at the same time its translation into the emotions. It is halfway between virtue, which is a spiritual reality, and passion, which is an act of the emotions. It is an existential and very human attitude. It is a lesson to remember, even though we should always pay more attention to what is spiritual than to its sensible expression, which is not necessarily the sign of the most profound regret.

What are the effects of contrition? Its first effect is to wipe out all the sins against which it is directed. God gives us precisely this grace to remit our sins. But it would be grave presumption to wait until we die to repent of all our sins. God is not obliged to give us this grace. And would our regret be sincere at that moment? Would it not rather be hypocritical? It is man's duty to prepare himself for a holy death.

However, there is a Gospel text that gives us reason to think that one sin will not be forgiven: "Every kind of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this world or in the world to come" (Mt. 12:31-32). The Tradition of the Church has kept several interpretations of this text. Here is what Father Lagrange, O.P. says about it:

"They (the Jews) had judged Jesus to be far inferior to their

ideal of the Masters. So be it! But when He acted by virtue of the Spirit of God to cast out evil spirits, the enemies of man and of his dignity, they had no right to look upon Him as an accomplice of Satan. Such is the nature of this sin, and Jesus said it would never be forgiven. It cannot be excused on the grounds of human weakness or of circumstances that solicit His mercy. But no Christian Doctor has dared to limit God's mercy as seen from God's point of view; and considering the man who asks forgiveness, no one has the right to refuse him this forgiveness by citing the Gospel. The rest is God's own secret" (*Commentaire de l'Évangile selon St. Matthieu*).

The second effect of penance is to restore to the penitent his past virtues since they are inseparable from the charity that he regains, and also to restore the merits he had gained before his sin.¹⁸ However Providence always maintains a proportion between the active dispositions of the free will at the moment of conversion and the infusion of justifying grace. The rooting of virtues in our soul depends, from one point of view, upon our degree of charity.

While penance revives merit acquired before sin, it does not follow that sin revives past sins. The forgiveness of sin is God's work, and man cannot by committing a new sin annul what God has already done. However, all things being equal, the recidivist commits a more serious sin by reason of the fact that he shows ingratitude for the forgiveness already received, and this ingratitude is measured by the contempt he has for his repentance and his confession.

Even though penance restores charity and revives merits, it does not follow that remitted sin leaves no trace in the soul. Sin is in fact an *aversio a Deo*, a turning away from God, and a *conversio ad bonum commutabile*, an undue, disproportionate attachment to some perishable good. Thus, a propensity to evil can still remain in the faculties that have committed sin. That is known as the *sequelae peccati*, the consequences of sin. The penitent must therefore strive

¹⁸ In the matter of merit, theology distinguishes four kinds of works that can or cannot gain merit. The "living works"—*opera viva*—that merit because they are done in charity; "mortified works"—*opera mortificata*—which are living works whose merit sin has annihilated. Then there are the "works that revive"—*opera reviviscentia*—which are mortified works that penance revives, i.e., whose merit penance restores. And finally there are "dead works"—*opera mortua*—which are good works from a certain point of view and in a relative way, but performed in the state of sin. Such works are without merit and cannot be revived.

not only to return to God, but also to make his repentance in some way equal his inordinate attachment. Satisfaction is likewise meant to help him attain the same goal.

Let us conclude with a remark concerning venial sins. Everything that we have said concerns mortal sins first of all, and venial sins, secondarily, in the measure that it can apply to them. For venial sin is not radical the way mortal sin is. Man, who is not a simple and intuitive being like the angel, can sin venially by performing inordinate acts, without even thinking or willing that they are opposed to his divine end. Thus venial sin is not directly opposed to charity, but it is opposed to the development of grace in the soul and to the active expansion of charity.

It is a property of love, if we may say so, always to be in the throes of growth, and also to subject everything to its demands. Charity is not exempt from this law. On the one hand, it wills to grow without ceasing, and venial sin sets up obstacles to it by paralyzing it, even if only for an instant. Venial sin is like a dead weight opposed to the fervor of charity, whose normal tendency is to increase. On the other hand, charity is imperious. It wants to subject and win over all the powers of the soul, including the sensible faculties. In the sinner, even the spirit becomes flesh. In the just man, even the flesh becomes spirit in a certain respect. Venial sin, especially if it is repeated and becomes a habit, prevents this universal radiation and penetration of charity through the soul. Thus venial sin cannot really disappear unless it is explicitly regretted, unless the penitent faces it in order to repent of it.

This is the reason why frequent examens and confessions are quite legitimate. However, it goes without saying that man cannot face up to all his venial sins, especially those committed without any profound attachment to them and without acquiring the habit of committing them. He cannot confess them all, and he must choose to confess those for which he knows he should feel greater regret. With regard to non-formulated or even unconscious sins, he should strive to regret them virtually, that is, to repent of them in such a way that if the thought of one of them should present itself to his memory, he would detest it. Moreover, the liturgy and the Christian life offer the faithful a thousand occasions for remembering and regretting his sins: for example, his prayers, and in particular the "Forgive us our trespasses" of the Our Father, the Con-

fiteor of the Mass, Prime and Compline, blessings, and all the sacramentals such as the use of holy water, particular exanens, etc.

(b) *Confession*

Let us repeat once more that the most important of the penitent's acts is not the confession of his sins but his regret for having committed them. Confession must not be a haphazard recitation, but the expression of interior regret and of the soul's desire to obtain greater hatred of its sin. What the sinner lacks, in spite of his desire, is the will: he lacks the will to stop wanting this evil that has such a strong accomplice in his heart; he lacks the will or deep purpose to love the good that is opposed to this evil. It is the grace of confession, to which absolution is joined, to give the penitent this will to good.

Even prior to being a sacrament, the confession of sins is a means of education. What father has not said to his child at one time or another: "I shall forgive you when you have asked my forgiveness"? God has raised this means to the rank of a sacrament. He uses his power of forgiveness to inwardly renew the penitent's heart. A most appropriate means of preparing children for confession, indicated by divine Providence, is to get them accustomed to asking their parents, their brothers and sisters, or their fellows, to forgive them.

The "matter" of confession is not vice but sin, that is, concrete evil acts. For example, a man may be inclined to drink too much, but he may not have committed this reprehensible act since his last confession. He is not obliged to accuse himself of being a drunkard, but only of having committed a particular, concrete sin, in certain circumstances.

In fact, circumstances can change the nature and gravity of the sin. They reveal intentions and throw light on the sinner's spiritual physiognomy.

When someone makes such an anonymous confession as the following: "I have lied, I have been disobedient, lazy, . . ." there is almost nothing the priest can do except give an equally general and anonymous warning which is not likely to help the sinner very much.

The rule by which the penitent must examine his sins is not, in the Christian economy, primarily an "exterior" rule. St. Paul has warned us of this by distinguishing Christian law written "on fleshly

tablets of the heart" and the Mosaic Law written "on tablets of stone" (II Cor. 3:3). The Christian ideal of examination of conscience is not to compare the exterior acts of our life to commandments, even if they be the Commandments of the Law, but to place oneself before God and realize the love we owe Him in answer to His Love. Love has exigencies that the external law does not have. Love wants incessant progress, and considers sins of omission as well as sins of commission. It attaches more importance to the virtues, which are the interior adornments of the loving soul, than to the precepts, which are exterior aids and are concerned only with the virtue of obedience.

When we limit ourselves to a consideration of the Commandments, we reduce the Christian life to a summa of duties and we deprive ourselves of the best thing in life, the only thing that counts: love. But it is difficult for the sinner to know his own love, or at least its tepidity and its cravenness. No stereotyped "examination of conscience" can replace this personal summons before God. It is up to parents to educate their children to meet it. It is up to educators and priests to prepare the faithful to meet it.

While it is important to tell the circumstances of certain sins in order to situate them in their real-life context and to present something besides anonymous acts, it often happens, on the contrary, that the enumeration of certain sins is supererogatory and artificial. For example, it is useless and even ridiculous to confess "ten or twelve venial sins of thought." Legalism can find its advantage in this sort of calculation, but surely not the true repentance that applies itself to regretting a given concrete act even if it must admit that this act was repeated in various different ways. The penitent must also remember that, all things being equal, sin of thought is less serious than sin of word, and that the latter in turn is less serious than sin of action. However, it is necessary for the penitent to confess the number of acts in cases where the sins are serious and exactly comparable: for example, a repeated sin of adultery.

Finally, the penitent must strive to understand his own intentions, or his lack of intentions, which are ordinarily sins against the cardinal sin of prudence. How many sins are committed through neglect to apply the intellect to acting righteously or to avoiding the occasions of sin! Mental lethargy, lack of zeal in using intelligence in our actions, are indications of a characteristic lack of love. These defects are at the root of many sins.

After the penitent has confessed his sins, he usually receives the priest's instruction. Every sacrament involves an instruction by the minister. In the case of Baptism, or Holy Orders, or even sometimes Matrimony, this instruction is rarely left up to the pastor's ingenuity any more. But the instruction given in the sacrament of Penance is always left up to the priest's discretion, and this is still another indication of the intimate and personal nature of the sacrament. Baptism is a birth, and this birth is the same for every Christian. Marriage is the mystery of the wedding of Christ and His Church, and this sign hovers over all unions. But the penitent stands alone in his uniqueness. God calls him by his name, and the friendship he asks of God is unique. And that is why the priest speaks to him alone and tries to adapt himself to his individual case.

However the priest is not God and his word is not infallible. There are penitents who hint at their sins rather than actually confess them, and then expect the priest, who does not know them, to speak some word of heavenly counsel that will correspond exactly to their state of soul. But the priest hears only what has been said to him. And that is the way God wants it to be. He wants us to pass through a man who has the limitations common to all men, and his own individual limitations to boot.

The penitent must first of all make himself understood. He, too, must adapt himself to the psychology of his confessor. If language is to be a bridge between two minds, it must be flexible and adaptable and respect the various possible ways of presenting the one and indivisible truth. It is the faithful's privilege to change confessors if he finds that in the long run this adaptation is too costly to him and prevents him from receiving the best possible advice. If the sinner has confessed only anonymous, trite sins, without giving any details, and if the priest does not know him, then the sinner can expect to be told "generalities."

There are priests like the Curé of Ars who have the charism of reading men's hearts like an open book. But that is a sort of miracle. God ordinarily confronts the penitent with a man destitute of these extraordinary powers, and yet a man who must judge in His place and give aid and counsel to the penitent, inasmuch as none of us is a good judge of his own heart. It is incumbent upon the penitent therefore to explain himself, even to humble himself without any false shame in order to receive the best possible help. This humiliation will help the priest give better advice. In addition it will un-

lock the faithful's heart so that he may understand the instruction, and dispose him to be more receptive to the grace of the sacrament and to take away from it more fruits—and this, after all, is the whole purpose of the instruction.

A better understanding of the priestly role will also make the penitent realize how he must choose his confessor. Since present-day law allows the penitent full liberty in addressing himself to anyone he pleases, the question arises as to the good use of this freedom. As far as the priesthood itself is concerned, there is no choice. Every priest is worth exactly as much as every other, and that is the essential. But with respect to the man who is a priest, there is a choice to make and that is important. God has willed that a man, His minister, should help to raise us up again. Obviously, the priest possesses his power not in his own right, but from God. But there is no confessor who is not first of all a man. And this man has not been sent to distribute absolutions as if he were an automatic machine, but to understand as much as a man can understand, to bring light, exhort, give advice, judge, urge reparation, and set the soul on the path of recovery.

All these acts are not useless, even though they are secondary with reference to the "form" of the sacrament, which is absolution. The Epistle, the Gospel, and the prayers of the Canon of the Mass are not eliminated under the pretext that they are secondary as compared with the Consecration, the act in which this sacrament essentially consists. Hence it is very desirable that those who go to confession regularly address themselves to the same priest whom they have chosen and in whom they have confidence.

These remarks emphasize the quality of the sacrament of Penance as an "outward sign." This quality is certainly not an exclusive privilege of Penance since it belongs to the essence of every sacrament. But we must insist upon it, for we often note a tendency, especially among Sisters, to devalue the sign and suppress as much as possible whatever material elements it may have, and to keep only what is known to be "essential." It has come to this: the priest is shut up on one side and the penitent Sister on the other, while grilles and veils are multiplied between them.¹⁹ The penitent (nun)

¹⁹ The "confessional" was "invented" by St. Charles Borromeo, so it seems. It therefore originated in Northern Italy in the sixteenth century. It began to spread in France slowly during the seventeenth century, and then was gradually made obligatory everywhere (at least for women) during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See *Dict. Droit Canon*, art. "Confessional" (E. Jombart).

is even invited to seek refuge in the maximum of anonymity so that the priest is obliged to use generalities if he has reason to speak to her. This decline of the outward sign, which is also noticeable in other sacraments, is particularly harmful in the sacrament of Penance.

Christ has willed that we should confess not to Him directly and invisibly, within the four walls of our room, but very concretely to one of His members whom He has qualified to hear our sins and to give us His forgiveness. He has willed that our reconciliation should pass through this very human dialogue, the sign of an invisible dialogue in which the soul tells its regret and God restores it to His full friendship. The sacrament gains nothing by no longer signifying anything. On the contrary, it has everything to lose, including—at the furthest limit—its reality as a sacrament, that is, its reality as a sign.

We can well wonder whether the increasingly popular attitude which denies the soundness of having “intermediaries” between God and the sinner may not stem from the fact that the priest is sometimes deprived of the opportunity to exercise his capacity as a visible, human intermediary, in the sense in which our Lord Himself was filled with this sweet virtue of humanity. This is particularly true when the priest does not know to whom he is speaking and whom he is listening to. The priest is the minister who holds Christ’s place, and the sacramental economy is a prolongation of the economy of the Incarnation. Now Christ did not fear to speak to the Samaritan woman or to the adulteress, or to allow a woman in the house of Simon the leper to anoint His feet.

Obviously Christ cannot sin. The priest can. In this regard all the sacraments involve certain risks. They involved far greater risks in the early Church, although from another point of view they offered fewer risks in that they were more direct, expressed more clearly what they signified invisibly, and implied less danger of dissimulation. In any event, we do not make a surer contact with the spiritual reality signified by the rites by eliminating the anointing of the chest or head in the baptismal rite, or by hiding the penitent woman and rendering her anonymous. In the words of Father Chenu, “It is not by getting rid of the homely rites of the serving and eating of food that we shall attain to a more perfect spiritual communion with

the sacrifice of Christ.”²⁰ The danger, if it exists, is that the sacramental economy will be corrupted and that its spiritual values as well as its realism will be lost.²¹ It is the obligation of every priest to be prudent, but he has no right to devalue signs under the pretext of purism. In order to make “gods” of us, Christ has given us a model of “humanity.”

(c) *Satisfaction*

The satisfaction is indicated by the priest at the end of the confession when he tells the faithful what his “penance” is to be. The fact that the satisfaction is also designated by the word “penance”—which signifies first of all a conversion of the heart, a return of the will—is an indication that there is no regret without reparation. True repentance includes the purpose of atoning for, that is, of destroying as completely as possible at least the consequences of past sin. Only the remorse of demons, because it is devoid of charity, lacks this purpose.

However, in view of the infinite nature of a direct offense against God, it is beyond our power to make reparation for such an offense. If Christ had not made satisfaction for the sinner, the sinner would not be able to make satisfaction by any natural means at his disposal. Christ’s Passion is a source of forgiveness and also a source of satisfaction. The sinner who, after his confession, is restored to the ranks of Christ’s friends and members can validly offer to God the satisfaction of His Son Jesus in His Passion.

But Christ does not want to save us without our cooperation. In view of the dignity in which He wants to keep us, He desires us to cooperate in every way not only in our conversion but also in the reparation of evil committed by us. How could we participate in Christ’s victory if He did not associate us in His struggle and His merits? On the other hand, He does not ask the sinner to make reparation equal to his offense, for that would be impossible. But He does ask him to make reparation in a proportional manner. As we have already seen, the sacrament of Penance is less a tribunal of strict justice than a reconciliation between friends. The moment

²⁰ M. D. Chenu, “Les sacrements dans l’économie chrétienne,” in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 30, p. 17.

²¹ On this subject, we recommend D. Dubarle’s very beautiful article, “Processions d’Espagne,” in *Art-Sacré*, July–August, 1953, pp. 12-26, especially the very profound reflections on p. 24. See also the Preface by M.-A. Couturier.

the Friend has remitted His friend's sin, He accepts whatever the latter is capable of giving Him and not what is beyond his power to do. Thus the small satisfaction that the priest demands is not proportionate to the offense incurred by our sins. Forgiveness is given gratuitously. Our "penance" is only a sign of Christ's expiation on Calvary that we apply to ourselves in the sacrament. But inversely to what happens in Baptism—inasmuch as Penance is a sacrament of healing—the penance imposed disposes us to *make satisfaction* ourselves, it invites us to do it, and gives efficacy to our reparative acts through the Passion of Christ.

We see that satisfaction is not a punishment, and can never be spoken of or conceived in this way. Punishment is meted out to the offender, whether he wants it or not. It is an act of prosecution on the part of the judge. The punished man is considered as an enemy, as a man who has wronged society or a person, and from whom society must secure reparation. On the contrary, in the sacrament of Penance, it is a reconciled friend, a friend of the One who "judges" him, who comes of his own accord to ask forgiveness and reparation for the offense he has committed. The satisfaction is a work of friendship; it must be performed in the state of grace. It proceeds from cooperating grace.

But even though satisfaction is, as we insist, above all a work of friendship, we must not thereby conclude that it is in no sense an act of justice. Imperfect and proportional as it is, the sinner's satisfaction is also a work of vindictory justice that the sinner inflicts upon himself. He seeks to avenge by his act the honor of his Friend and to accomplish total justice insofar as he is able.

The penitent also strives—and this is the "medicinal" aspect of Penance—to heal the wounds of sin within himself. After the soul's disorder has been repaired by contrition, these wounds still remain, which consist in the evil inclinations and evil intentions left after the sin has been forgiven.

There are three great classes of satisfaction: alms, fasting, and prayer, depending on whether use is made of exterior goods which are given up, the goods of the body which are mortified, or the goods of the soul that are once again made subject to God. These satisfactions are imposed by the priest in accordance with the reparations or "medicines" suited to the sin, or according to the sinner's fervor and to the desire he may have expressed. Inasmuch as there is question of a friendly reparation, this desire also enters in, and

the priest takes it into consideration just as he bears in mind the penitent's temperament and ethnic customs.

For instance if a zealous convert in Africa were given some little prayer to recite when he is accustomed to rigorous and mortifying religious practices, this good man might be disconcerted and consider his penance ridiculously disproportionate to his sins, slight as they may be, and also to his desire to make reparation. On the other hand, too afflictive a work might be too much for another Christian, either because his desire is tepid or because he already has delicate health that he finds hard to accept.

The confessor is not obliged to force the penitent's desire to the utmost limits, but only to stimulate it, to invite the sinner to do of his own accord and willingly what will bring about his total cure. And the priest actually makes this invitation following the absolution, in the prayer *Passio Domini*, when he says: "May all the good that you shall do and the good that you have the intention of doing, may all the evils you endure and that you will endure, be accepted in remission of your sins, for the increase of your grace, and as a reward of eternal life."²² Thus the voluntary works that the penitent adds are also counted as sacramental satisfactions. They are especially to be recommended in liturgical seasons of penance which, although they are first of all times of "conversion," are also, precisely because of this, times of reparation and mortification.

We have pointed to three great kinds of satisfactions. It goes without saying that they each contain many very diverse species. In the "genus" of the goods that make the soul subject to God, we can include readings from the Old or New Testaments. We can also include confession itself which, because of the humility and shame that it gives, contributes to the reparation. The lack of suitability and diversity that plagues so many of the penances ordinarily given nowadays may be attributed to the penitent's lack of zeal, to his inadequate training and to his ignorance of many Christian prayers, or perhaps to the priest's lack of apostolic imagination.

Final question: Can a penance be accomplished by another than the penitent? Yes, but only in part. We have said that penance has two aspects: one, according to which it is a work of justice and strives to avenge the honor of the Friend or to make reparation for an attack against the order established by God. In this sense a pen-

²² The formula according to the Dominican rite, which is somewhat more developed in this regard than the Roman rite.

ance can be performed by another, but then it is meritorious for the one who performs it and not for the penitent. When a penance is considered under its aspect as a medicine, it is efficacious, that is, healing, only for the one who performs it.

The doctrine of indulgences is founded on this communicability of satisfactory works, understood in the first sense. Since we are all members of one another, the whole Church forms a single treasury of merits, which the Church disposes of in her government. By permitting the faithful to draw from this treasury from time to time on the occasion of a pilgrimage, of a great feast, or the recitation of prayer, the Church gives body to the dogma of the Communion of Saints and makes of it a living and efficacious doctrine for her children. The fact remains, however, that the "merits" of others can only bring us remissions from temporal punishment. The satisfactions that we perform ourselves have merit for us, and this merit goes far beyond the compensation of temporal punishment. Eternal life cannot be merited by one person for another—except of course by Christ, who is the strict cause of our salvation.

3. THE ACTS OF THE PRIEST

The priest's acts consist in blessing the penitent, in hearing his confession, judging this confession, giving him advice, imposing a penance upon him, and then granting him absolution.

(a) *The blessing*

The first thing the priest does is to bless his penitent. Indeed, he is not there to "punish" or humiliate him. On the contrary, it is the penitent who humbles himself and the priest who raises him up,²³ just as the father of the prodigal son did when the boy returned home. That is why the priest's first act is a blessing. The blessing is like Christ's kiss to His newly-found sheep, and it is a sacramental that helps the penitent to make a good confession. This little ceremony in a certain sense sets the tone of the dialogue that then begins. It should inspire attitudes and exterior style, including the architecture of the confessional. When will our confessionals be as welcoming as the house of the prodigal son's father, at least as far as we can picture it in our imagination?

²³ In the Dominican rite, the ceremony unfolds as follows: The penitent on his knees receives the priest's blessing, then he prostrates himself at his full length to say his Confiteor; the priest then raises him up with the words: "*Surge, Arise.*"

(b) *The judgment and absolution*

Then the priest hears the confession, judges, gives a penance, and grants absolution. In these acts he is acting as the *instrument* of Christ, by the power of the keys entrusted to him. In other words, he efficaciously works the remission of sins. The term "keys" comes from the fact that in this capacity the priest has the power to open the gates of heaven to the penitent and also to keep them closed against the impenitent sinner. The Church, which is the mistress of this power (see Jn. 20:23), gives it to her priests as she sees fit. The power of Holy Orders is not sufficient to permit the priest to hear confessions unless he also possesses the power of jurisdiction. However, priests who for one reason or another do not have jurisdiction *hic et nunc* can absolve in the case where there is danger of death or of common error.

Inversely the power of jurisdiction can be limited even for priests who possess it, because of censures (suspensions, interdicts, excommunications) that weigh upon the penitent. Certain sinners are specifically named as the objects of these censures; certain sins require a censure by law. If the priest does not have the power to lift the censure himself, he must have recourse to a higher jurisdiction.

Once the priest has lifted the censures, he can absolve the sins in question. The rite of absolution has varied greatly through the centuries, as has the rite of Penance, whose three classes we have already distinguished: solemn, public, and private. In the Latin Church today, only the indicative form of absolution subsists: "*Ego te absolvo*—I absolve thee." And this is the only formula that is coherent with the doctrine of sacramental efficacy. The deprecativ formula—"*Deus te absolvat*, May God absolve thee"—which was formerly predominant in the Church is still used in certain Eastern rites. Evidently, it is valid in localities where it is liturgical. The basic criterion in this matter is the sacramental practice of the Church.

(c) *The pastoral instruction*

But before the priest grants absolution, he is invited to give an instruction. There are countries in which the instruction is not customary, and that is regrettable. The instruction is part of the ceremony of the sacrament, even if it does not constitute its "essence." The priest no longer acts in this matter as an instrument of Christ

but in his own name as an accredited servant of Christ and as a pastor of souls. To put it another way, he acts not as the representative of the Bridegroom, but as the friend of the Bridegroom.

The monition requires the priest to bring into play all the resources of his theology and psychology. His aim is to lead the penitent, with the help of God, to true contrition, that is, to contrition born of the perfect love of charity. That is not too great a demand, and it is not a form of harshness but rather an act of mercy. The only harshness consists in anesthetizing any movement of charity in the sinner when charity alone can save him. Very probably, the priest knows the soul of his penitent only through signs and through the experience he has of his own case. But no more than that is required of him. He is not God, and can have no other knowledge.

In looking for contrition in his penitent's heart, the priest will feel more like a "physician" than a "judge." His role is not merely to induce the penitent to outwardly conform his attitude to that of certain laws. Nor need he adopt the mannerisms that some priests have learned from a bourgeois pattern of education. The priest's role is to try to recognize the deep-seated will and intention of this son of God whose confession he is hearing. Is this will still evil, or is it wounded by bad habits, or is it a weak, misguided, or unenlightened will? The priest will strive to put his finger gently on the focus of disease just as Christ would do, and to show his "patient" that goodness and true life consist in love and the gift of self.

The priest will also show the hierarchy of sins, or rather the hierarchy of goods, among all the accusations that the sinner often bundles into a single category. The priest will always encourage his penitent by showing him the good that God has placed in him, and what God is capable of drawing from him, even from the evil that is now a thing of the past. He will avoid speaking to him as a man of the law who thinks only of the precepts and can only condemn. On the contrary, he will speak to him as a friend or a father who seeks to make the good attractive. He will not ask him not to fall into sin again, but to make an effort to hate what is evil, to love what is good, and to flee from dangerous occasions. The grievous thing is not so much to fall again as to renounce willing the good.

The priest will avoid a still more subtle harshness that consists in giving a material application to the principles of his moral theology. The theologian strives to enumerate and define within each of our powers the qualities known as the virtues, that correspond to

the love of charity. In the measure that these qualities have been correctly defined, no one can fail to desire them the same way he desires charity. And yet there is danger of two opposite excesses in this matter.

On the one hand, there are virtues whose relationship with charity is subtle, or that may appear to be virtues in their own right even apart from charity. When a given vice is condemned and a given act of virtue recommended, without specifying that charity must inspire it, there is danger of misleading the penitent. Thus St. Thomas Aquinas has held on to certain Hellenic categories of virtues such as vengeance, civility, magnificence, grandeur, etc. It is clear that these virtues and others do not have the same meaning in the morality of the pagan philosophers as they do when they are inspired by the Spirit of God. The Christian must watch out for this. Likewise the priest must not demand justice or fortitude before love, but as a component element of the virtue of love. The Christian does not seek to make his rights triumph at all costs. He must even renounce such triumph if love demands it: "If someone strike thee on the right cheek . . ." (Mt. 5:39).

The other excess consists in demanding of beginners or of those who find a particular virtue difficult to practice the act of that virtue that corresponds to the perfection of love, thus arousing an aversion for a virtue which is considered unattainable. God is patient. The priest must not expect the little grain of wheat to produce its ear all at once. He must know how to recognize the good that already exists, then indicate as well as he can the difficult and personal paths of growth in goodness. He will accept the fact that love may at first express itself in ways that only remotely resemble what his "theology" has taught him to look for. He will remember that the law of the Christian is a law of liberty and above all a guide to liberty. He will teach souls to discover by themselves the virtuous and progressive cooperation that the Spirit of Christ demands of them. And he will know that they must discover the ways of this cooperation not as functions of theoretical data that he thinks up or that he has remembered from his study of casuistry, but as functions of the real data that they alone really know. These principles find all sorts of applications in the domain of chastity, prudence, justice, etc. We merely mention them in passing.

These remarks apply chiefly to the confessions of persons whom the priest knows. We must also think of those that he must try to

understand when they rush in for a rapid confession on the eve of Easter or Christmas. If the priest finds he can say nothing, he should maintain a sober discretion. Without being contemptuous of the "Word" that the penitent may expect from him, he will call to mind some passage from the Gospel or speak briefly about the approaching feast. He will strive through his words to make the penitent feel Christ's mercy, but he will avoid the sort of "unction" that is opposed to true piety. If sin still holds the sinner in the hazy mists of dissimilitude, Penance will bring him back to the solid and helpful earth of the truth and of divine likeness. It is good to make the repentant faithful feel the newly-found security of the true and the good.

REFLECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Now that we have presented the essential principles of a theology of Penance, we shall develop certain pastoral themes in these "Reflections and Perspectives."

The sacrament of healing. Penance is a sacrament of healing. For the person who may no longer receive Holy Communion, it is like a second Baptism, another plank of salvation, a new "initiation" into the morality of Christ, thanks to which the penitent can return to the Eucharistic feast. This character of a "second Baptism"—at least in the case of mortal sins—that is attributed to Penance has brought it about that certain "types" in the Old or the New Testament valid for Baptism are also traditionally used as types of Penance: the flood and the call to penance, Naaman the Syrian, Jonas and Ninive, the "judgments of God" pronounced by the prophets Isaias, Jeremias, Amos, and Osee, the preaching of John the Baptist, the pool of Siloe. However, the prodigal son is in a very special way the model of the penitent.

Inasmuch as Penance is a sacrament of healing, the grace of this sacrament demands the close collaboration of the penitent working toward his cure. Here the acts of the subject are raised to the dignity of becoming the "matter" of the sacrament. The confessor must remember these principles and maintain the bond between the virtue and the sacrament of Penance, as well as between repentance and divine forgiveness.

Education in contrition. Since the principal act of the sacrament is contrition, the principal effort of the sinner must be to regret,

and the priest's must be to dispose the soul to repentance, to nurture regret.

This education is not merely a matter of "examination of conscience," which always refers more or less to an exterior law. Examination of conscience can be improved and "rejuvenated" by taking into account the present-day modalities and practices of the law, or else by differentiating it in terms of states of life and professions. But it is difficult to go much further than that and to help a man, solely by the presentation of a good "examination of conscience," to discover the lack of love in his heart that find expression through his own personality.

Sin is never an abstract proposition. It is a concrete act, a voluntary choice, to which man's heart has consented. No one knows this choice except God and the heart of the one who has committed the sin. The best way to examine one's conscience is not to start by reading over an abstract and anonymous "examination of conscience" but by looking concretely at one's life before God, in the light of the love with which He has loved us in delivering up His Son for us and in the light of the love which we owe Him in return. The educator's role is to give the sinner a sense of sin, to help him to have a delicate awareness of the demands of love, to enlighten his judgment, and to help him correct his ways. (Concerning the meaning of sin, see *Lumière et vie*, No. 5, August, 1952, "Le sens du péché et sa perte dans le monde actuel.")

There are many other means of educating the conscience besides the "examination of conscience." Among these means are preaching, sacramental instruction, all the sacramentals that remind the soul of its sinful condition (ashes, holy water, etc.), readings from the Bible, especially from the Gospels, etc. In the case of children, every mother has the grace to prepare her own child in a more special way. Her intuitive knowledge of the child's heart will enable her to guess where the sin is, and she will try to train him in contrition before God. Can she go still further and in certain circumstances even solicit the confession of guilt? That is a matter of circumstances and discernment which the mother must judge for herself with all the delicacy of charity. There are times when such an avowal may help the child.

In relationships between a religious and his lay superior, and in the more frequent case of relationships between a Sister and her superior, an "unburdening of conscience" may be practiced and

actually is. But such revelations must be free and spontaneous. They are traditional in those monastic communities where the function of the abbess is typically "maternal"—and not "fraternal" as for example, in the mendicant Orders. However such unburdenings of conscience open the door to many abuses if the superior is not on her guard or if she herself is the least bit lacking in discretion. Direction by the "staretz" who is not a priest is unknown in the present-day Latin Church.

The confessional. There is no symbolism for the confessional such as there is for the altar or the church, and the confessional is not blessed. And yet the construction of the confessional is of interest to others besides the carpenter, for it can be built in a way unsuited to its function.

When the confessional was institutionalized its purpose was to maintain maximum discretion in this sacrament between the priest and women penitents. Confessionals have never been obligatory for men. In certain countries like Spain, men go to confession in front of the priest, where there is no grille or high door, whereas the women go to confession to his left and to his right. But neither a certain fear of women on the priest's part nor an excessive desire to hide on the part of women should make them lose sight of the meaning of the sacrament. This sacrament is a "sacrament of friendship," the outward and efficacious sign of a reconciliation between friends, in which the priest represents the divine Friend. It is essential that this sacrament retain all its meaning, and the canonical regulations that have instituted grilles would cease to be "prudent" rules if because of these barriers this meaning were lost. The "secrecy" to which the priest is pledged is something altogether different from a lack of knowledge of the sinner he receives.

To this must be added the fact that the darkness of certain confessionals involves other risks, such as for example the indiscretion of a priest who might not ask certain questions if he could see the woman he was interrogating. Experience seems to show that we have greater respect for a person we can see. Canon Law requires the confessional to be "in an open and visible place—in loco patenti et conspicuo" (Can. 909, Sec. 1).

These few remarks suggest what we have a right to expect of a confessional: that it be simple and light, and at the same time discreet.

Confession. Since the sacrament of Penance is a reconciliation

between friends, there is nothing less "ready-made" or prearranged than this sacrament. We can make a broad outline of a pastoral guidance adapted to chronological age (the confessions of children—see on this subject Marie Fargues, "*Les enfants se confessent*" in *L'Eglise et le pécheur*, Paris, Cerf, 2nd ed., 1948, pp. 117-131—the confessions of adolescents, adults). We can also make distinctions according to the type of confession (those of recent converts, of practicing Catholics, of Easter-Communicants, of seasonal penitents); according to the state of life (religious, married persons, widows, unmarried persons); according to health (the confession of patients in sanatoriums and hospitals, etc.), according to profession, etc. And yet these are only tentative sketches, for absolution is not given to a "chronological age" or to a "profession," but to an individual person. Pastoral guidance must strive not so much to foresee different cases—which are infinite—as to give the penitent advice suited to his needs.

There are two excesses that the priest must avoid: First, "speedy" confession is a great temptation on the eve of feast-days; and secondly, the inverse temptation to indiscretion. Interrogations should be rare, especially in the case of "practicing" Catholics, unless the latter ask for it, or at least unless their confessor knows them well and judges such questions useful. The confessor is much less a "judge" than a "physician," and he must trust the sincerity of the "patient" who reveals his illness to him. In questions of chastity, and above all the chastity of women, the priest must be particularly discreet lest confession, which is meant to be a remedy for the penitent, become an unbearable torture and, from this point of view, an evil. A certain obsession for details in this matter is particularly to be avoided.

In any case, attention to this type of sin should not divert attention from other sins that are sometimes more serious or of greater importance to the soul, and to which the priest may pay no attention whatever. Thus the morality of "business" is sometimes thought to be wholly outside the domain of morals. The sinner has no interest in his business morality, just as he may have no interest in his trade or profession except as a way "to earn money." And no one is there to tell him that if he has any delicacy of conscience he should know that the primary purpose of his means of subsistence is not financial gain but service rendered to society through the best possible use of his personal qualifications. A morality of love real-

izes that and makes demands that a morality of law does not. But that is only one example.

There are many other sins which we just "don't think about." Thus we keep a careful record of certain sins against "religion" (fasting, abstinence, arrival at Mass before the Offertory, etc.), but we do not think of our habitual lack of faith in everyday living, of our judgments "according to the world" that reveal a superficial faith and an underlying atheism. We do not think of our lack of trust in Providence, of our sins against prudence, of our sins of "foolishness," of our failure to try to understand our neighbor and his problems with a loving heart. We forget about injustices committed, sins of disobedience (e.g., the soldier's disobedience to his commanding officer, the office employee's disobedience to his "boss," the wife's disobedience to her husband, etc.), which laymen sometimes suppose to be applicable only to children or to persons in the religious life, etc. Often the whole education of the moral life, which consists in far more than merely living a life of "temperance" in the face of carnal lusts, has to be started all over again. It is distressing to see how often this narrow horizon is also shared by members of the clergy. The "moral ratings" given to moving pictures by priests sometimes seem to be based more on low-cut necklines or the length of dresses than on a consideration of certain vices whose influence is more injurious, such as lying, stealing, hatred, injustice, unbelief, superstition, etc. In a word, religion does not consist solely in "tempering" one's evil inclinations. Present-day Christians need to be stimulated in other spheres, for they are phlegmatic, timid, and often lacking in generosity and faith.

However "direction of conscience" is not to be confused with the "instruction." The purpose of the latter is to help the soul to judge its sins, their relative gravity, and above all to regret and make amends for them. On the other hand, what is called direction of conscience has an educational purpose. Actually the use of the term "conscience" in this connection is open to criticism, for it is not so much the *conscience* that needs to be trained as prudence. With regard to this question, see Volume IV, *Theology Library*, p. 244 ff.

And to conclude, a word about the "rhythm" of confessions. Obviously, this is a personal matter that each one must decide for himself, but it must depend in the first place upon the sins committed. The pastor may offer certain criteria to guide those who

receive Communion regularly. It seems that harmony ought to be preserved between the rhythm of confessions and Communions. It is abnormal both from the point of view of the subject and of the sacraments received that a person who receives Communion almost every day should go to confession only once every six months. An analogy of sorts might be made between confessions and the letters exchanged by an engaged couple: lovers who write to each other every day have many things to tell each other, those who write only every six months find they have nothing left to say. Each one must discover the rhythm that suits him best, with the help of his spiritual director and in terms of his needs and of his desire for spiritual progress.

It is abnormal likewise to reduce the rhythm of one's sacramental practices as one advances in years. There are parents who send their children to confession often, although they don't go themselves and although they know that their children will "emancipate themselves" when they grow up. Sacramental practice must be the sign of the interior life, and this life, like all others, is meant to grow and not to decrease.

Exterior penance. In addition to designating a virtue and a sacrament, the term "penance" can be applied to the following: sacramental penance or satisfaction, penances proposed by the Church—Lenten penances, fasts, alms, pilgrimages, prayers; penitential seasons; exterior acts of penance, etc.—mortification.

Sacramental Penances. What penances are to be given besides the classical "decade of the Rosary"? And first of all, in what spirit are they to be given? Their purpose is to help the penitent to regret and to make amends. In the measure that it is possible, a penance ought to be chosen as a "remedy" suited to the sin, or at least to a particular sin judged to be the most important one. That does not mean that reparation is excluded. Healing penance can also be reparative. Thus the catalogue of penances can vary ad infinitum.

And yet there is danger that this method may be impossible or indiscreet in the case of penitents whom the confessor knows only slightly or not at all, or in the case of those numerous penitents who have a slight awareness of their moral imperfections but scarcely any spiritual life. For all of these and for the others too, the best penances usually are a reading assignment, or a precise recommendation as to prayer, or certain charitable practices.

Certain parishes have set up two Bibles on prie-dieus for the use of their penitents. Thus the confessor can recommend, without fear that the penitent does not possess the book, readings from Mt. 5, Mt. 6; Mk. 2:13-17; Lk. 9:3-5; Jn. 6; the accounts of the Passion; Acts 2:42-47; I Cor. 13; Rom. 8; Jas. 2; Jas. 3; I Pet. 1:13-21, I Jn., etc. It would also be desirable to make prayer books available to the faithful, for they know few prayers besides the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary." There are magnificent hymns in the liturgy of which they are totally ignorant. In order to acquaint them with the liturgy, two breviaries in English for the laity might be made available for the use of the faithful.

The penances traditionally imposed by the Church—the Lenten fast, Friday abstinence, etc.—are in disfavor at the present time. There is very little fasting any more, and little "belief" in the exterior works of mortification. It is true that mortification must be chiefly interior, and that exterior mortification is never more than a means. None the less it would be great presumption to believe we were interiorly mortified if we never used any of the exterior means. It may be that the health and temperaments of present-day Christians call for another type of asceticism and mortification than the one that has been traditional until the present (see *L'ascèse chrétienne et l'homme contemporain*, Coll. "Cahiers de la Vie Spir.," Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1951). However there is no lack of mortifications within the reach of everyone.

When St. Leo recommended alms, he recommended it even to the poorest, for there is always a poorer person to whom we can give something. And when he recommended fasting he also meant it to be for all, even for the sick who should accept certain privations. We have often made of these traditional penances dull, stereotyped practices, and since such practices cannot apply to everyone we have lost both the spirit and the habit of penance. The meaning and the spirit of practices should be explained before setting forth their material details, which are variable.

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it depends on certain basic principles of canon law. In the present bibliography we shall limit ourselves to the presentation of works that relate directly to the doctrine of Penance.

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Chapter V

EXTREME UNCTION

by J.-A. Robilliard, O. P.

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Chapter V

EXTREME UNCTION

I. The Testimony of Scripture and Tradition

If there is a sacrament whose origins are obscure, it is certainly Extreme Unction. It is all too clear that the first Christians practiced their faith without taking the trouble to record and describe for the historians of the future some of the rites they had received from the Lord. We would be utterly unable to trace the sacrament of unction back to Apostolic times had not St. James, as if by chance, mentioned it in a letter that he addressed to the Christians of the dispersion.

Is any one of you sad? Let him pray. Is any one in good spirits? Let him sing a hymn. Is any one among you sick? Let him bring in the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess, therefore, your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be saved (Jas. 5:13-16).

Here is a text of perfect simplicity, and one whose freshness discourages any sort of pedantry. It would be a bad blunder to try to explain its purport without reference to a context which happens to be unknown to us. It is better to stress that Extreme Unction has its roots in the facts and institutions of the Old Law. Here as elsewhere, Jesus did not come to inaugurate an entirely new economy, but to fulfill and renew from within the figures and shadows of the Old Covenant. All the miraculous cures reported in Scripture presaged from afar the effects of the sacrament of Extreme Unction. Moreover, the disappearance of bodily ills was promised by the Prophets. Jesus realized this promise; but as usual He went far beyond the expectations of the Messianic program. He is truly the conqueror of blindness and leprosy, of Satan and death. But through bodies He wants to reach souls. He accomplishes signs in the flesh only in order to beget faith in the heart.

Thus the rite of Extreme Unction, which has the power of remedying weaknesses of soul and body, which dispenses spiritual as

well as physical comfort, is in continuity with our Savior's gestures that took possession of souls while healing bodily ills.

It is true, and St. James' text convinces us of it, that the healing of the flesh was originally very frequent and made a deep impression on the first Christians. The faith of the young disciples needed to be strengthened by witnessing miracles. But when the dramatic exercise of charisms, essentially ordered to the manifestation of faith, came to an end, there still remained in the Church a permanent institution, a sanctifying unction, intended less to guarantee the truth of the Word than to purify souls by healing bodies. Extreme Unction prolongs in time the healing actions of Jesus. "Doctors will not cure you, for you will die in the end. But it is I who heal and make the body immortal" (Pascal).

It would be no easy task to trace Extreme Unction through the centuries, for the evolution of this rite and of its doctrines has remained obscure. Indeed, a good historian (A. Chavasse) has set down for us the practice of the Latin Church from the third century until the Carolingian epoch. But from this period we can glean very few texts. It was not until the beginning of the ninth century that an ample harvest of documents became available; and even so these texts have not been systematically classified or rigorously analyzed.

During the first centuries of the Church only the blessing of the oil of the sick was liturgically established. The most venerable formula of benediction is the one to be found in Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*, written between 218 and 235: "If oil is offered, let him (the bishop) give thanks as for the bread and the wine, not in the same terms but with the same intention: 'Just as by sanctifying this oil, with which you have anointed kings, priests, and prophets, you give holiness to those who use and receive it, may it likewise procure comfort to all those who taste it and health to those who make use of it.'" We see that the bishop consecrated the oil of the sick while reciting—nay, improvising—a thanksgiving analogous to the thanksgiving that he pronounced over the bread and the wine of sacrifice. We see also that the faithful put this blessed oil to various uses and were even accustomed to drinking it.

Other formulas of benediction and other literary or hagiographical texts make us realize that in the West, under the influence of the barbarian invasions and perhaps also in the absence of a local

clergy, Christians soon came to have a diminished and somewhat superstitious idea of the sacrament of the sick. Moreover, St. James' letter was unknown to the Latins until the middle of the fourth century. Thus, from the start, the faithful of the West do not seem to have made a practice of carrying out the Apostle's commands.

In this regard, the most typical document is the letter sent on March 19, 416, by Pope Innocent I to Decentius, Bishop of Eugebium (Gubbio), a village in Umbria attached to the Roman See. Upon the Bishop's request, the Pope informed him of the rules he was to follow in liturgical ceremonies, and closed his letter with a reference to Extreme Unction:

There is no doubt that (St. James' text) must be understood to refer to the sick faithful who can be anointed with the holy oil of chrism, and to mean that the oil prepared by the bishop may be used as an unction not only by priests but by all Christians in their own need or in the need of their families. Moreover, We consider it futile to dispute the bishop's right to do what priests obviously have the right to do. For St. James speaks of priests because bishops, hindered by other occupations, cannot go and visit all the sick. Moreover, if the bishop has the leisure to visit or deems that someone is worthy of being visited by him, he can without delay bless him and anoint him with oil, for he, the bishop is the one whose role is to prepare the chrism. Is it not precisely because the chrism belongs to the category of the sacraments that it cannot be poured upon penitents? Since the other sacraments are refused them, how could one think it permissible to grant them one of these sacraments?

As we can see from this text, the Christians of the West considered the sacrament to reside in the chrism consecrated by the bishop and not in its application by priests and, as was more often the case, by laymen. For the sick person himself, his immediate household or some holy personage performed the salutary anointings. It was in this way that St. Genevieve cured sicknesses or demoniac possessions, according to her *Vita*.

In the eighth century, under a distinctly Oriental influence, which was perhaps due to the presence of bishops of Greek or Syrian origin, the West returned to a doctrinal position that was more in conformity with the usage of Apostolic times. Starting with the Carolingian reform, we are on solid ground, and positive deposits are no longer fragmentary but lend themselves to historical research. The rites of unction were incorporated into a composite that included the visit to the sick person, aspersion with holy water, confession, the imposition of ashes and of the hairshirt, the reci-

tation of the Psalms and of the Litany; then, after the anointing, Communion, the *commendatio animae*, and often even the office of burial. This was only a practical procedure, but it was later to lead to the consideration of the rite of Extreme Unction as the complement of the sacrament of Penance and as a preparation for death.

As a matter of fact, the theology of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was to be so keenly aware of the spiritual efficacy of Extreme Unction as to forget its power to deliver from bodily ailments. It was in the twelfth century that the unfortunate formula "extreme unction" began to replace the term "unction of the sick" to designate the sacrament. The term "extreme unction" inevitably proved to be an invitation to delay the anointing of the sick until they were on the point of death. Much later, during the Reformation, the Protestant offensive obliged theologians once more to place emphasis on the spiritual effects of the sacrament and to neglect its power to heal bodies. Indeed, on the eve of the Council of Trent Extreme Unction had gradually evolved from the sacrament of the sick, which it really was, into the sacrament of the dying. Most fortunately, the Council deliberately set aside the definition of unction as the sacrament of the dying and with greater breadth of vision declared the belief of the Church in opposition to the Protestant errors. The Council expressed its views in three doctrinal chapters and four canons, the text of the latter being as follows:

- Canon 1. If anyone says that Extreme Unction is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ our Lord and announced by the blessed Apostle James, but is only a rite received from the Fathers or a human invention, let him be anathema.
- Canon 2. If anyone says that the anointing of the sick neither confers any grace nor remits sins nor comforts the sick, but that it has already ceased, as if it had been a healing grace only in the olden days, let him be anathema.
- Canon 3. If anyone says that the rite and usage of Extreme Unction which the holy Roman Church observes is at variance with the statement of the blessed Apostle James, and is therefore to be changed and may without sin be despised by Christians, let him be anathema.
- Canon 4. If anyone says that the priests of the Church, whom blessed James exhorts to be brought to anoint the sick, are not the priests who have been ordained by a bishop, but the elders of each community, and that for this reason the proper minister of Extreme Unction is not the priest alone, let him be anathema. (*Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, pp. 104-105.)

With regard to the East, the blessing of the oil of the sick contained in Serapion's *Eucologie* is the only ancient formula that has come down to us. It shows us that the purpose of blessed oil, in Egypt as well as in Latin lands, was healing and exorcism. In the East, at least among the Byzantines, it became customary to confer the unction not only on the sick but on all who suffered a spiritual infirmity, and finally on all sinners. The Holy See protested several times against this abuse and ordered the following note to be printed in the *Eucologie* intended for Catholics:

It is fitting to remind priests that the sacrament of the holy oil was ordained by our Lord as a heavenly remedy not only for the soul but also for the health of the body, and that it is administered only to those who suffer from a serious illness, and not to persons in good health.

It appears from this text that for the administration of the sacrament by Orientals of the Byzantine rite the Church demands only a serious illness, without insisting on the danger of death. Moreover, this is the position taken by the Council of Trent.

II. The Effects of Extreme Unction

1. THE HEALTH OF THE BODY

Even the most ancient Christian documents bear witness that Extreme Unction has the power to heal bodies, and the Church has never ceased proclaiming this truth. She forbids the anointing with consecrated oil of persons condemned to death or persons about to undergo a serious operation. That is because she looks upon the rite of anointing not only as the means of an interior purification, but also as the sacrament to be conferred upon the sick whose recovery she is hoping for. And facts do conform with the doctrine. Very often when Extreme Unction is received with full consciousness by patients endowed with a very strong faith, it completely changes their physical condition. Admittedly, such an affirmation will seem to sceptics to exhibit an undisguised naïveté. And on the other hand, it may scandalize certain persons whose abstract idealism refuses to admit that a sacred rite can make contact with biological realities, or that the salvation of the spirit can be related to the healing of the flesh. But Christ did not heal the sick solely for the purpose of creating symbols and of proclaiming Himself the physician of the soul's wounds. He was moved with real compassion by the body's wounds. And the Church, following His

unconscious violation of the soul. When sick persons are in a coma, it is legitimate to give them the sacrament of Extreme Unction only if they are "believers." And even this method, based on the faith of the sick person as known in the past, is simply a makeshift.

Visiting the sick. One of the most significant tasks of the pastoral ministry is visiting the sick. These visits are the often necessary preludes to visits to the dying and to the administration of Extreme Unction. Formerly an aspersion with holy water, ritual prayers, and the use of sacramentals were customary on visits to the sick, as a sort of preface to the sacrament. From the earliest times these visits were recommended to priests (see Mt. 11:8; Lk. 9:2; 10:9; Acts 5:15, etc.). They, too, call for a preparation on the part of the priest.

How should one speak to the sick? It is a hard thing to do when one has not been sick oneself. The healthy person is sometimes awkward and burdensome to the sick person when he speaks of the patient's illness without understanding anything about it; and still more when he asks questions that are literally unanswerable, for no suffering can be expressed in a logical proposition that will satisfy the questioner.

He who visits the sick, and especially the dying, must have a great love of silence, after the example of Mary at the foot of the Cross, who certainly kept from "saying" anything in the face of such a great mystery. (On this subject, read the beautiful letter of Father A. M. Falaize on the care of the sick, in his *Lettres spirituelles*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1945, pp. 316-324.)

However there are sick persons who can be amused, and it is a great charity to offer them some distraction. On the other hand it is not always the priest's role, especially if he comes to hear confession or if he has just heard a confession, to entertain the patient with trifling, or worldly, or political matters. Even when the Christian looks to the priest as a "friend," he does not ordinarily expect this sort of conversation with him. True charity has much to learn from the psychology of the sick. (See on this subject the bulletins of Prieuré Saint-Jean, prieuré de frères malades, 33, rue Alph. Daudet, Champrosay par Draveil, S.-et-O.)

The sick person's state should inspire all the more solicitude on the part of the priest and of the Christian laity inasmuch as illness is much more widespread now than formerly because of the reme-

dies that keep the sick alive longer, and because the sick are more isolated now that they are cared for in sanatoria, hospitals, and clinics rather than in their own homes.

The circumstances of certain states of isolation are often tragic, and call for special attention. For example, the cases of husbands isolated from their wives and children for years; women isolated from their husbands and homes. In former times the sick person usually lived in his family and in his own town, among his healthy friends and relatives. Today the sick person lives more and more in a world apart, both geographically and sociologically.

Certain Catholic groups of sick persons have been formed (U.C.M., Auxilia, etc., and especially the recent Catholic Fraternities of the sick: see Father D'Argenlieu, *Les fraternités catholiques de malades*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1953), as well as newspapers and periodicals devoted to the sick, etc. This world of the sick is considered pastorally as a sort of professional Catholic Action group or social milieu. It has its chaplains, its press, its own particular mentality. Can the charity of Christians look upon this "milieu" simply as if it were like all the others?

There are also the sick who are not so isolated and whom the priest can no longer visit as he formerly did, because of his many duties. In certain parishes, visits to the sick are made regularly by the clergy one morning a week. This regularity has the advantage of making visits to all the sick of the parish seem quite ordinary, and of not "surprising" those who are seriously ill or who are unbelievers. In other parishes the names of the sick are read out every Sunday and prayers are recited for them by the congregation. But such practices are not possible everywhere. Pastoral activity, like charity, is always inventive. There is no stereotyped pastoral procedure.

The confession and Communion of the sick. It is particularly painful to the sick person to go to confession either at home or in a hospital. The able-bodied person can usually choose his hour and his confessor. The sick person sends for the "chaplain," who comes when he can—sometimes at a moment when the sick person is least ready to receive him. The priest must be attentive to these varying moods. But above all he must see to it that confession brings peace and consolation, and not distress. A person who is in a fever, in great pain, is easily troubled. The sacrament of Penance is a remedy of the soul. It must do good, not harm.

And as for Holy Communion, this is often the hardest thing for a patient in a hospital. After a restless, sleepless night in spite of the sedatives given him, he is roused at five o'clock or earlier by the commotion of the night shift emptying out all sorts of receptacles, taking care of the morning toilet of the patients, etc. And the chaplain often arrives, preceded by his little bell, when it is still dark and this hubbub has scarcely been muffled. In a matter of seconds, the patient, who has been deprived of Mass, must receive Communion. Even this description, which is in no sense exaggerated and covers typical hospital practice, should be made darker in the case of certain hospitals (some secular, and others run by religious).

The facilities granted for celebrating Mass and receiving Communion in the evening are not yet honored in Catholic hospitals. However it seems that in the majority of cases, the late afternoon, after visits are over and before supper, would be the most auspicious moment for bringing Communion to the sick. At that hour the patient would have had an opportunity to enjoy a few moments of silence, he would not be expecting the impending visit of the doctor and the nurses, and he would receive consolation for the night to come.

From the chaplain's point of view, he would be able to pass through wards that were a little quieter, and he would not have to hurry to finish before the nurses, scrubwomen, and doctors arrived. He must adapt himself to different situations. There may also be the question of dispensations. The sacraments are made for men, and not the contrary. The sacraments are means of uniting us to Christ.

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THE SACRAMENTS OF ECCLESIASTICAL SOCIETY

Holy Orders and Matrimony are two sacraments in a class by themselves. Their purpose is less to answer the needs of the individual Christian than to provide the framework for the life of the Church as a whole.

Holy Orders perpetuates in the Church the function of those whose official duty is to preserve and communicate the sacred deposit of faith and the sacraments of the faith. By means of a visible sign it gives those who receive it the spiritual power corresponding to their office. Thus, it is a sacrament. Baptism and Confirmation give spiritual power too: the power of worshipping, and the power of administering certain sacraments—Matrimony, for instance. However they do not give the power to “make holy” (*sacrum facere*, whence comes the term sacrifice) which the priest, in fulfillment of Christ’s command, exercises at Mass. Nor do they give jurisdiction over the faithful. There is need therefore for another hierarchy of powers to be communicated by another series of visible signs: these are Holy Orders.

The ceremony of Matrimony is of its very nature a sign. Whatever the rite, the religion, the custom, there is an exchange of words, gestures, or exterior goods by which a young man and a young woman engage themselves thenceforth to be husband and wife. This visible manifestation of an invisible contract suffices to establish the marriage of pagans. The sacrament of Christian marriage is something more. It bears a new and lofty meaning: the union of Christ and His Church. The canonical exchange of consent between a baptized husband and wife is a sacrament, because it is the sacrament of that union; that is to say, it signifies the union and effects it invisibly in each of the spouses and in their home.

Chapter VI
HOLY ORDERS

by P.-M. Gy, O. P.

I. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST IN THE ECONOMY
OF SALVATION

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Chapter VI

HOLY ORDERS

The structure of the Church admits of a number of orders: in the Latin Church, in addition to the episcopate, the priesthood, the diaconate, and the subdiaconate, which are called sacred orders, there are the minor orders of acolyte, exorcist, lector, and porter. The "sacrament of order" means not only the spiritual power proper to the different orders but also the rite of ordination by which these powers are given. In the latter case, it would perhaps be clearer to speak, as do some of the Scholastics, of the "sacrament of ordination."

The institutional notion of order, "*ordo*," comes from the Romans who applied it either to the Senate in opposition to the people (*ordo et plebs*), or in a wide sense to the different orders (*ordines*) making up the state. Christians found that the term "*ordo*" adequately expressed the hierarchic and organic character of the Church, the body of Christ. From the hierarchical point of view, the clergy (*ordo*) is distinguished from the laity (*plebs sancta*), but in a broader sense we can use the medieval expression revived by Pope Pius XII and speak of the "order" of the laity which has a specific organic function within the body as a whole. Thus it appears that order is a power communicated not only to a person but to the group into which that person is introduced: the word has a collegial or ecclesiastical flavor. It suggests, too, the messianic priesthood of Christ according to the order of Melchisedech, referred to in the Bible (Ps. 109:4).

The sacrament of order concerns the community because, according to St. Thomas (IIIa, q. 65, a. 1, c), its reason for being is to give the Church, the body of Christ, its very structure, to safeguard its unity, and to insure Christ's priestly work in it. Thus before studying the priesthood and ordination, it will be well to recall the place that the priesthood of Christ occupies in the economy of salvation.

I. The Priesthood of Christ in the Economy of Salvation

God has a plan for mankind: a purpose foretold to Abraham, begun by Christ, and to be fulfilled in the Second Coming. God wants to communicate Himself to men, to bring them as a people to a participation in His divine life. And this People of God, this society of divine life, participates in the divine even in its social structure. Within this society, authority is hierarchic in the etymological sense of the word.

God's plan for His people unfolds in three stages: the people of the Old Covenant; the Christian Church Militant; and the Church Triumphant. The hierarchy of the Church Militant, which is the object of this study, can be understood only within a context midway between its preparation under the Old Covenant and its consummation in eternity.

1. THE OLD COVENANT AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

Israel is a people *convoked* by God (such is the meaning of the Greek word ἐκκλησία), and set apart by Him. God instituted kings, priests, and prophets in Israel, whose functions, because they were interwoven with God's design, were all orientated toward the fulfillment of this design in and by Christ.

The king was Yahweh's "lieutenant," the man anointed (= Christos) by Him to pasture His flock. Priests were chosen from among the descendants of Aaron to offer official worship and sacrifice, although the Epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes the fact that the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices were imperfect and only figurative: the high priest was not free from the weaknesses of the people, for which he had compassion in his function as their mediator with God. "He is able to have compassion on the ignorant and erring, because he himself also is beset with weakness, and by reason thereof is obliged to offer for sins, as on behalf of the people, so also for himself" (Heb. 5:3; cf. 4:15).

Moreover, the Levitical priesthood was concerned with temporal and perishable things: its sacrifices had to be renewed unceasingly from one generation to the next; high priest succeeded high priest, without bringing perfection to men. The priestly office, though more excellent by reason of what it prefigured, was less excellent in itself than the prophetic office. Even though priests were called by

The first and second degrees of the Christian priesthood (bishop and priest) are contained in the "apostolate" of the Twelve, as in their source. It is in the consideration of their mission and their mode of life that the theologian will find the explanation and the model of the Christian priesthood.

The Apostles were simple men. Neither lords nor princes, neither rich men nor wise after the manner of the world. This fifteenth-century artist realized all this when he represented the Apostle St. James as a poor pilgrim, barefooted, staff in one hand and holding the Gospels in the other, with a simple beggar's wallet at one side and a vial of oil at the other for the sacramental needs of the sick. It was poor and simple men like this who spread the faith throughout the world; they are the pillars of the Church. No priesthood is valid unless it traces its "apostolic" origins back to one of these men.



God, as Aaron was (cf. Heb. 5:4), prophets were called in a more special way.

Although the prophets were outside the social organization of God's people, they assured the exercise within it of a necessary and permanent function, the most important one of all: God's people were established through faith in His promises, in His word; and it is this people who spread God's word through the prophets. The prophets were the privileged instruments through whom Revelation was effectuated and unfolded. They were charged with exhorting the people to fidelity and with uncovering error and sin. In an epoch when the Spirit had not yet been given in His fullness, the prophets were before all else men of the Spirit. God used them to call back His people, who were still sinful and weak, even in their capacity as His people.

For the Jews were a carnal people, their worship and their law were still earthy, concerned with concrete, tangible things outside man. But the prophets brought hope of the Messianic kingdom, of the perfect king whose law would be within men's hearts and who would be worshipped in spirit.

The Old Testament offers us, in addition to the Levitical priesthood, the ephemeral and mysterious image of Melchisedech, the priest-king of Salem who, in blessing Abraham, from whom the twelve tribes were to spring, seems to have exercised pre-eminence over the Levitical priesthood. Melchisedech also prefigures an eternal priesthood in a certain sense, through the mystery surrounding his origin and his end: "First, as his name shows, he is King of Justice, and then also he is King of Salem, that is, King of Peace. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but likened to the Son of God, he continues a priest forever" (Heb. 7:2-3).

2. JESUS CHRIST, HIGH PRIEST

Jesus the Son of God, priest, prophet, and king, was sent by His Father to accomplish the divine plan, to save, bless, and divinize the people of God, by making them pass from this world to the Father by means of His Paschal Mystery, His death and Resurrection.

Jesus is the Messiah, that is to say, the Christ, the King anointed by Yahweh to reign forever over the house of Jacob (see Lk. 1:32-33). But until His second coming, His kingdom is not of this world

(Jn. 18:36); it is spiritual, and we must enter it through faith and charity.

Jesus is also the long-awaited Prophet (Dt. 18:15 ff.), or better still the Son who came after the prophets, who had only been servants (Mt. 21:33 ff.; Heb. 1:1-2). The prophets transmitted promises, but He announced the Gospel, i.e., the good news of the fulfillment of the promises. Revelation was progressively unfolded by the prophets, and it reached its fulfillment through Him. For the prophets brought God's spoken Word to men, whereas Jesus is the Word made flesh. No one but the only-begotten Son of the Father could reveal the innermost secret of divine life, the secret of the triune God (Jn. 1:14 and 18).

Jesus is priest and mediator between God and men. Whether in the mysterious and poetic typology of Melchisedech or in the imperfect preparation of Aaron's lineage, all the functions of the Old Covenant converge upon Him to whom the Father has solemnly sworn: "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech" (Ps. 109:4). It is upon this verse of the Psalms that the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Tradition of the Church has built its theology of Christ's priesthood.

Like Melchisedech, Jesus is at once priest and king; he is indeed a priest forever. His vocation dates from His entry into the world (Heb. 10:5 ff.), and His priestly anointing dates from the Incarnation. It is as man that He is priest and not as God, for "every priest is taken from among men" (Heb. 5:1); and He ought to be able to call men His brothers as well as "the children whom God has given Him" (Heb. 2:11, 13). He is a priest in His human nature, but His priesthood is based upon the hypostatic union, and is linked to His divine sonship: "Christ did not glorify himself with the high priesthood, but he who spoke to him, 'Thou art my son, I this day have begotten thee'" (Heb. 5:5). The hypostatic union consecrates and sanctifies the humanity of Christ in such wise that His whole being is dedicated to the service of God.

From this union of two natures in Christ, from this consecration of His humanity by the divine Person, flows all His priestly activity. He is compassionate, He has been tempted and has suffered (Heb. 5:7-8), but He is without sin: "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, set apart from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). There is no longer any need for a succession of priests, for there is only one Priest. There is no longer any need

for a succession of sacrifices, for there is only one Sacrifice. Christ "does not need to offer sacrifices daily (as the other priests did), first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this latter he did once for all in offering up himself. For the Law appoints as priests men who are weak; but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son who is forever perfect" (Heb. 7:27-28). The sacrifice of Christ by itself alone fully redeems mankind and leads it to perfection, to the consummation of eternal life. Christ, true man and true God, is the high priest, that is, the perfect intermediary, the sole Mediator between God and men.

3. THE PRIESTLY WORK OF CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH

Christ came to accomplish the divine plan, to establish the Church and communicate divine life to it. During the period from His Ascension until His second coming (in the eyes of God this period is only a brief prelude, see I Cor. 7:29), Christ's envoys, His priestly ministers, will continue to prepare His Church for her entrance into the Kingdom. When they have finished their task, Christ will come in His glory. Then, for all eternity God will be all in all, and Christ the sole Mediator, Teacher, and King.

But until that second coming we are only on the threshold of His kingdom, and the heavenly Jerusalem is still in process of coming down to us from God (Apoc. 21:2). Our Savior has won a definitive victory, but it remains to be fully exploited; and the fruit of this victory, which is beatitude, has yet to be made available to all His members. And that is why we have sacraments, and, as under the Old Covenant, exterior government and teaching.

The sacraments are at once the means of realizing the kingdom and its anticipated realization. By their means, Christ gives to His members the fruit of the sacrifice of the Cross which He continues to offer up to His Father in heaven. By Baptism He incorporates new members into His priesthood. In faith, He makes them possessors of the pledge of beatitude, and participants in the celestial liturgy. On the other hand, the sacraments merely prepare us for eternal life and require for their administration bishops or priests, ministers of Christ, the one Priest. Christ is the only Priest. All His members share in His priesthood, and yet some are the ministers of His priesthood in a very special way. This threefold affirmation is equally true of Christ's royal and prophetic functions.

Thus the Church, in her holiest aspect, in her essential reality, is a city which comes down from above and which descends from God, a city created by the envoys of Christ, by His Apostles. The Church is Apostolic, that is to say, she springs in her entirety from Christ's mission, from the government, the teaching, and the priesthood of the Apostles. The apostolic and priestly office does **not** only mediate between God and the Church; it is also the instrument that God used to create His Church.

II. The Apostolic Hierarchy in General

1. THE FUNCTION OF THE APOSTLES

The Church comes from the Apostles, the Apostles come from Christ, Christ comes from God. Christ is the foundation, so are the Apostles. Christ is the light, and they are too. He is the truth, and they are the teachers of the truth. Who hears them hears Christ, and to reject them is to reject Christ Himself. The Church is apostolic to the roots of her being. The sacraments, the deposit of faith, the government of the Church all come from the Apostles.

Jesus Christ is priest, prophet and king. The Apostles were strictly His envoys, ἀπόστολοι. Their role did not have the independence, the self-sufficiency, that the priest, prophet, or king enjoyed—or appeared to enjoy—under the Old Covenant. They were **only** ministers. The primitive Church was so much impressed by this difference that she was loath to apply to the Apostolic hierarchy terms usually applied to the Aaronic priesthood, though she **did** use these terms in a spiritual sense to designate the faithful as a whole.

The Apostles shared Christ's threefold office. They governed the Christian flock, the spiritual people of God; they announced the good news of the kingdom, they were heralds, but their doctrine was not their own—their teaching was purely a transmission (παράδοσις); they offered up the Eucharist, which is the memorial of Christ's Pasch, the Sacrament of His sacrifice, and they celebrated the other mysteries by which the power of that sacrifice becomes efficacious within us.

The Apostles communicated their mission to their delegates and to those designated to succeed them. However they could not communicate their role as founders, with and through Christ. After them, there were no more divinely inspired authors, for Revelation

was completed with the last of the Apostles. It is the preaching of the Apostles that is written down in the books of the New Testament; and it is the duty of their successors to pass on the deposit. Both in the organization of the Church and in her worship there are fundamental elements which neither the bishops nor even the pope can change.

2. THE POST-APOSTOLIC HIERARCHY

The New Testament and the writings of the Apostolic age mention, in addition to the Apostles, the *episcopi* (inspectors), the *presbyters* (elders), and the *deacons*. The terms *episcopus* and *presbyter* were interchangeable at that time, and indicated participation in the government of the local community. These terms, borrowed from contemporary Jewish communities, gradually acquired a definite meaning as the original hierarchic structure of the Church was defined. The pastoral epistles use the word *episcopus* in the singular and the term *presbyter* in the plural, thus indicating (and this is not the only indication) an evolution from the time of St. Paul toward a monarchical episcopate which was to preserve the Apostolic succession. This evolution, accomplished at varying rates of speed in various localities, did not provoke any internal tensions in the Church of which we have any record.

It is even quite possible that in some Christian communities, Alexandria for instance, the Apostolic succession devolved for a time upon a college of presbyters, each possessing a radical participation in the Apostolic-episcopal succession but exercising it only as a member of the college at the time of the election of a new bishop. We have no proof that at any given moment the Apostolic succession was entrusted to the presbyterium in all localities. On the contrary, Tradition as a whole invites us to affirm that the distinction between the episcopate, the priesthood, and the diaconate goes back to the Apostles and is of divine institution (see Code of Canon Law, c. 108, 3, which clarifies Canon 6, Sess. XXIII, of the Council of Trent, Denz. 966). St. Jerome makes the distinction between the episcopate and the priesthood one of simple ecclesiastical law, and he draws his arguments from the texts of St. Paul and the episcopal succession of Alexandria. His thesis is not decisive.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE SACRAMENT

The divine institution distinguishing three degrees in the sacrament of Holy Orders likewise provided these degrees with similarities in structure that are invariable despite great historical diversity in the exercise and the sociological involvements of the priesthood. The episcopate is the fullness of the priesthood, "an order in the strict sense," i.e., in the sacramental sense. It is "the whole, of which the priesthood is only a part" (Journet). The sacramental order of the priesthood shares the very substance of the priesthood, but not its plenitude. The priest is radically *sacerdos*, but he is *sacerdos secundi ordinis*. The sacramental order of the diaconate is at the service of the bishop primarily, and secondarily for the assistance of priests. The subdiaconate and the minor orders are sacramentals.

According to St. Thomas, "no one can receive the episcopal power who has not first received the power of the priesthood" (*IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 3, art. 2, qa. 2, *sed contra*); and the episcopate is not a sacramental order (*ibid.*, sol. 2). A deeper knowledge of the Church's early Tradition, particularly the Roman Tradition, requires us to deny the first of these affirmations. Until the tenth century, Roman deacons often received episcopal ordination directly. The strict sacramentality of these ordinations is further implied in their parallelism with ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood—a parallelism which is constant "in all the rites in use in the universal Church at different epochs and in different countries," as proclaimed by the Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* issued by Pope Pius XII on November 30, 1947.

But is not the sacramentality of the episcopal ordination invalidated by concession of the power to ordain—the episcopal power *par excellence*—to simple priests during the Middle Ages? On February 1, 1400, Pope Boniface IX granted the Augustinian abbot of St. Osyth (in the diocese of London) the power to confer all the orders, including the priesthood, upon his religious. This permission was revoked on February 6, 1403. On November 16, 1427, Pope Martin V granted the same privilege to the Cistercian abbot of Alzelle (in the diocese of Meissen). And lastly on April 9, 1489, Pope Innocent VIII granted to the abbot of Cîteaux and to the abbots of his four "daughter houses" the power of ordaining

their monks to the diaconate, and this power was exercised until the French Revolution.

The three papal bulls just cited are authentic beyond all doubt. Besides, they are quite in accord with a theory current among some medieval canonists. Can it be said that the Roman Pontiff could not have erred in a practical decision of such importance? The answer is not as clear as for the Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis*, which the best authors (Hurth) consider to be a practical decision that is infallible *de facto* but is not an *ex cathedra* definition. Even supposing that the pope can, by an act that is neither sacramental nor one that consecrates, give a simple priest the power to ordain other priests, the divinely instituted distinction between bishop and priest would remain. In contrast to the bishop, the simple priest would have a power to ordain whose validity would be essentially subject to limitation, as is his power to confirm.

As we have already said, it is in the bishop that the plenitude of the priesthood resides. Without possessing this plenitude, the simple priest and the deacon share in the sacrament of Holy Orders, each in a unique way. The lesser orders share in it too, but exteriorly and as sacramentals. We may apply to all the orders the notion of the "plenitude" proposed by St. Albert and St. Thomas: i.e., the sacrament is realized fully in the episcopate, and in a participated way in the other orders. However the way in which the different orders participate in the sacrament is more diverse than St. Thomas could have known. Even more essentially than being a succession of degrees, each of which gives access to a higher order, the orders are differentiated organic functions within the body of the Church, i.e., sacramental charisms. And the Christian called to receive one charism is not necessarily suited to receive another.

4. THE EQUILIBRIUM OF PRIESTLY DUTIES

The exercise of the priesthood (by the bishop and the priest) has varied greatly both spiritually and sociologically in various times and places. But in essence its function is one of worship and evangelization. The function of worship, i.e., the celebration of the liturgy and more particularly of the sacraments, presupposes the power of Orders. Without this power, none of the sacraments except Baptism and Matrimony could be celebrated. The function of evangelization embraces the transmission of God's Word, of the

Apostolic deposit in all its forms, the evangelization of non-Christians and the guidance of those who are already Christians. It presupposes a jurisdiction or a mandate that distinguishes the function proper to priests from the spreading of the Gospel in ways that may be common to them and to the laity.

It is important for us to realize something that is often forgotten, namely, that the function of worship and the function of evangelization are absolutely connatural, even though the power of Orders alone is sacramental. For the power of Orders bears directly on the sacraments, which are the first-fruits of eschatological realities, and not on the preparation of these realities. The person who specializes in the exercise of one of these two functions should not lose sight of the twofold character of the priestly work of the presbyterium in which he has a part. Otherwise he will fall into a ritualism foreign to the spirit of the New Covenant or he will fail to understand the specific difference between priests and other Christians. If worship were deprived of evangelization, it would return in a certain respect to the Old Law, and forget that the *res* of the sacraments relates each of them to the Mystical Body in its own way.

Inversely, evangelization without the sacraments would remain at the stage of development it had reached with St. John the Baptist. It would not yet provide the *Ecclesia* with her constitution, which is sacramental; nor would it provide her with the first-fruits of the good things to come. Faith and the sacraments must not be separated: the sacraments are the indispensable channels of divine life, but in order to be received fruitfully they demand a faith enlightened by the preaching of the Gospel in its diverse forms.

If the priestly functions are considered in themselves, the office of worship is the most important since it is concerned with the holiest realities: the sacraments, and above all the Body and Blood of Christ, by which the Church is united to her Spouse in Eucharistic Communion. But the function of evangelization requires greater holiness on the part of the one exercising it: high apostolic caliber in the minister is intrinsically necessary to the diffusion of the Gospel. In this sense we can say with St. John Chrysostom: "The word . . . is the greatest, the holiest, and the best of all sacrifices" (*Hom. cum fuerit ordinatus*, P. G., 48, 694). "My priesthood is to preach and to announce [the Gospel]: that is the sacrifice I offer" (*In Rom.*, XV, 16, P. G., 60, 655).

In fact bishops have often reserved preaching for themselves as their own function, and delegated this duty to priests only as an exception. They thus called to mind St. Paul's words: "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel" (I Cor. 1:17).

III. The Degrees of the Apostolic Hierarchy

1. THE BISHOPS' APOSTOLIC FUNCTION

Every bishop is the successor of the Apostles in a given place, in a local Church. He is, one might say, a new member added by the Holy Spirit to the Apostolic College. Like Matthias, he enters into communion with the other Apostles, among whom Peter exercised primacy and ultimate authority.

To the bishops was entrusted the plenitude of the apostolic functions, save what belongs properly to the founders. Their office is sacramental, doctoral, and pastoral. In patristic times, the bishop was the *sacerdos* of a particular Church. It was he who habitually celebrated the entire liturgy, including the Sunday Eucharist, and who presided over the synaxes of prayer; it was he who incorporated the faithful into Christ in the Paschal mystery through Baptism and Confirmation, which were completed by the Eucharist. It was he who reconciled penitents, who imposed hands on priests and deacons, who consecrated the oil of the sick.

The bishop was both the teacher and the preacher. The apostolic succession in a given Church must necessarily involve the continuity of orthodox teaching from a single pulpit of truth.

Finally the bishop was the spiritual leader of the people, of the flock whom Christ had given him to keep, to watch over (*ἐπισκοπή*), under the primacy of Peter.

We have already seen that the functions of evangelization in the Church are not essentially different from what they were under the Old Covenant. On the contrary, the function of worship is the communication of eschatological values through the sacraments. And this function itself must be conferred by a sacrament, known as ordination. The soul of the Christian who has been ordained a bishop or priest is marked with a perpetual spiritual power, the character of Christ, that enables him to celebrate the sacraments and makes him the living sacrament of Christ-the-Priest in their celebration.

The ordained Christian cannot lose his sacramental character. The sacraments which he celebrates do not depend upon his moral worth, or upon his faith, but solely upon his intention of doing what the Church does. With the exception of Penance, in which the jurisdiction of the bishop necessarily intervenes, he cannot lose the power of administering them, even though under certain circumstances this administration may become illicit.

By reason of his ordination the bishop also receives a charism of teaching, but this charism is temporary and demands of the one who receives it a much greater spiritual obligation. Through this gift, the bishop becomes, in communion with all of the Apostles' successors and in a unique way with the successor of St. Peter, the guardian of the deposit, the doctor of the faith, and the preacher of his Church. But at the same time he must be faithful to his religion and united to the communion of the Church universal.

The bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter, formerly received by his episcopal ordination and now receives by his papal election an inerasable charism which makes of him the criterion of orthodoxy and of communion, and renders him infallible when he expresses the faith of the Church by an *ex cathedra* judgment he intends to be definitive.

From the moment he is designated to govern a Church, even though he has not yet received episcopal ordination, the bishop has jurisdiction over it. That is to say, he has the power to direct the Christian people spiritually toward eternal life. It is a spiritual power, and while it is of a different order from the power of temporal government, it is more like this power than the other powers of the bishop. It could be exercised by a simple cleric.

2. THE PRESBYTERIUM

Beginning with apostolic times, every local Church had a presbyterium and deacons. The presbyteriums (council of elders) collaborated with the bishop in the government of the Church. At the start, the duties of the individual priest seemed very limited, since the Christian community was small and exclusively urban. But gradually priests were given the exercise of regular liturgical functions and the duty of preaching. By the end of the fourth century they enjoyed almost all the liturgical powers of the bishop save those of consecrating the holy oils and of ordaining priests.

However, the idea persisted that the priestly office was more

communal than personal. Both in Greek and Latin the same word, *πρεσβυτέριον*—*presbyterium* designated both the body of priests joined to their bishop and the office of the individual priest.

The function of the presbyterium was essentially a participated office. Let us call to mind a Biblical figure used as early as the third century in the prayers for ordinations: just as God communicated the spirit of Moses to the seventy elders, so that they might share in the government of the people of Israel, so, after giving the Holy Spirit to the bishop He communicates this same Spirit to the priests in order to associate them to the bishop's office. These are priests "of the second order"—*sacerdotes secundi ordinis* (IV Kgs. 23:4). This idea colors the entire preface of the Roman rite for the ordination of priests.

Just as the plenary office of the bishop rests upon a sacramental character, so the participated office of priests of the second order rests on a character received at their ordination. In virtue of this character they can celebrate the Eucharist, confer Baptism, anoint the sick, and, with jurisdiction, absolve penitents. In extraordinary circumstances they can confirm, consecrate the holy oils, confer orders below the diaconate. But the power of consecrating the Eucharist, which is unrestricted of its very nature, differs from the power to confirm, which is extraordinary and restricted as to its validity.

3. THE DEACONS

We have seen that the priest possesses the apostolic function, although in a limited way. He also really possesses the priesthood of the bishop, but he does not have it in its plenitude. The same is not true of the deacon, the subdeacon, and the recipients of minor orders. These men are not priests but they are the auxiliaries and collaborators of the priests. Nevertheless the deacon shares to some degree the apostolic office of preaching, at least for the liturgical proclamation of the Gospel. Other examples of diaconal preaching are rare in the history of the Church. This prerogative of deacons seems to rest upon the identification of the "Seven" instituted by the Apostles (see Acts 6:1-6) with the deacons made known to us by St. Paul. This identification is traditional.

The diaconate is part of the sacrament of Holy Orders. It is of apostolic origin and divine institution. The whole of Tradition associates it with the episcopate and the priesthood and regards it as

the object of a consecration, for exactly the same reason. In conformity with the essential equilibrium of the sacrament, the office of the deacons was exercised conjointly in the liturgical assembly and in the temporal concerns of the Church. In the liturgical assembly their duty was to assist the celebrant and lead the community in prayer. The bishop of the primitive Church could not celebrate any sacrament without the ministrations of the deacon (this law still applies in the Eastern Church). In the Latin Church deacons had practically disappeared from parishes toward the end of the Middle Ages. In his ceremonial role, the deacon has been partly supplanted by the master of ceremonies, while the faithful have been left pretty much to themselves. Only in recent times has pastoral liturgy rediscovered the importance of the diaconal instructions.

As the immediate assistants of the bishop in the liturgy, the early deacons (in Rome, the archdeacon) were also associated in the administration of the temporal concerns of the Church and in works of charity: "The deacon is the bishop's ear, eye, mouth, heart, and soul" (*Apostolic Constitutions*, 11, 44). Such duties belong, strictly, neither to the priesthood nor to the laity. They may well justify an effective restoration of the diaconate.

4. ORDERS BELOW THE DIACONATE

The subdiaconate and the minor orders are not sacramental, but these blessings of the Church efficaciously procure actual grace and prepare for the reception of the sacrament of Holy Orders. In this respect the role of the blessings is theologically comparable to that of the exorcisms preparatory to Baptism, but their purpose is to help the deacon to give the liturgical assembly its vital structure. Naturally this structure became more diversified as the assembly grew in size. The number and importance of these orders have varied. Thus the East has never known the acolyte, the counterpart of the Roman subdeacon. Even at Rome porters and exorcists soon disappeared. They were restored in Gaul purely as a matter of archaeology when the Roman liturgical books were adopted there, but there was little understanding of their significance in actual liturgical practice.

The conferring of minor orders originally consisted simply in the presentation of the instruments proper to the order, unaccompanied by any prayer as if it were simply a profane function. Gradually

the ceremony became a true liturgical function, especially for the subdiaconate which, in the Latin Church of the twelfth century, became a veritable consecration to the service of the altar, a "major order," involving the obligation of chastity.

The Council of Trent expressed the wish of re-establishing minor orders. This intention has been formulated again since that time, but without any concrete results.

IV. The Sacrament of Ordination

1. THE VOCATION

Every Christian, every man, has received a call from God, who wants to lead him to eternal life by a particular path, a particular state of life, and calls upon him to play a certain role among his brothers. But certain men receive a special call like the one Jesus addressed to Peter and Andrew and to the other Apostles: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt. 4:19). In commenting upon this passage of the Gospel, St. Thomas says that a vocation is twofold. There is its exterior aspect: Jesus tells Peter to follow Him, or the bishop calls a young man to ordination. Its interior aspect is a spiritual impulse by which God moves our hearts, turns them toward Himself, toward a priestly ideal. It is the very content of our predestination: God sees us eternally, loves us, and calls us as members of Christ and as priests of Christ. We do not have two distinct predestinations.

When Jesus called His Apostles outwardly, He also called them inwardly. When the bishop calls outwardly, he should do so only after discerning the signs of an interior call by Christ (Canon 1353) and after cultivating the seeds of that call. There are four signs of a vocation: attraction, right intention, purity of life, and aptitude. Attraction and right intention are two aspects of the same thing. God attracts someone to His service; and this person desires to become a priest with a right intention, that is, not for such reasons as social advantage or a yearning for adventure (in the case of a missionary). The desire, the attraction to the priesthood resides essentially in the will. It may or may not be accompanied by an emotional attraction to the priesthood. Finally, the attraction may be to God's service in general, or it may be to the religious life as distinct from the priesthood and even regarded as incompatible with the priesthood. Some of the great bishops of the early Church, in-

cluding St. Martin, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory the Great, were ordained in spite of themselves, but they were already monks. In fact it is inconceivable that the Church would forcibly call a Christian layman to the priesthood and to all the semi-monastic obligations that it involves.

2. THE APTITUDES AND PREPARATION OF ORDINANDS

Every baptized male Christian can be validly ordained a priest, but the Church has established a number of conditions for ordination designed to assure the dignity and efficacy of the priestly office (Canons 974 ff.). Several of these conditions call to mind the prescriptions of the Apostle Paul to Timothy and Titus (I Tim. 3; Tit. 1), whence the name *regula apostolica* given to these conditions during the Middle Ages, and the term "irregularities" applied to situations involving failure to meet these conditions.

The lower orders are a natural preparation for the priestly functions. The present-day discipline of the Church requires that they be received in succession, a procedure that is somewhat artificial. However an ordination *per saltum*, i.e., skipping one degree of the hierarchy, would be valid, as would the ordination of a deacon directly to the episcopate. The law of intervals between the minor orders, unknown in the Middle Ages, was established by the Council of Trent. Unfortunately, in the Latin Church the orders below the priesthood exist only in seminaries. Both liturgical guidance and evangelization have suffered as a result.

3. THE RITE OF ORDINATION

In the ordination of the bishop, the priest, and the deacon, we can distinguish two parts: the choosing of the ordinand, and his consecration. The choice and examination of the elect are no more than liturgical expressions of acts which have already taken place outside the liturgy. But the ritual consultation of the community indicates in a striking way that the ordinand will be called upon to exercise his ministry within its midst and in its service.

The community takes an active part in the ordination proper. As in every celebration, the various members of the Mystical Body have their own proper form of active participation, their organic role which differs from that of the Head. At the ordination of priests according to the Roman rite, once the consecrating bishop and the presbyterium have imposed hands on the ordinands, the

bishop invites the whole Church to beg God to consecrate her future priests: *Oremus fratres carissimi, Deum Patrem omnipotentem. . . .*

After the clergy and the people have prayed in silence, the bishop concludes the common prayer aloud. Then, extending his hands once more, he offers solemn thanksgiving to God for the hierarchy He has established among His people. This is the consecratory preface, the form of the sacrament, which explains the meaning of the bishop's first imposition of hands (the matter of the sacrament). Certain elements of the Roman preface appear in nearly all the other liturgies: the priests, typified by the Mosaic elders; the very brief enumeration of the duties to be exercised; the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the ordinand; the prayer for the virtues befitting his new state. On the whole, the liturgical formula speaks more of the sanctifying grace of ordination than of the spiritual power that it gives. This latter power is given more emphasis in later rites.

At the height of the preface the bishop invokes the Holy Spirit upon the ordinand so that He may make him a priest:

"Da, quaesumus omnipotens Pater, in hunc famulum tuum presbyterii dignitatem, innova in visceribus eius Spiritum sanctitatis, ut acceptum a te Deus secundi meriti munus obtineat censuramque morum exemplo suae conversationis insinuet—We beseech Thee, almighty Father, invest this Thy servant with the dignity of the priesthood. Do Thou renew in his heart the spirit of holiness, that he may hold the office, the second as to importance, which he has received from Thee, O Lord, and by the example of his life point out a norm of conduct."

According to the terms of the Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* (1947), this essential sentence is required to make the ordination valid. However it would be an error to dissociate the rest of the preface from it to such a degree as to make it a sort of jewel-box setting off the beauty of a precious stone.

Starting with the Carolingian era, a number of other rites were added to this consecratory preface: the bestowal of the sacred vestments, the anointing of the hands, the presentation of the chalice and paten. To the sober symbolism of the imposition of hands was added another and much more expressive rite: in the sight of all, the bishop vested and prepared the new priest for Mass, thus making him the man of the Mass.

Episcopal and diaconal ordinations are analogous in structure.

In the episcopal ordination, at the imposition of hands the Gospel Book is also laid upon the head of the bishop-elect. The book of God's word is, as it were, associated with the hand of the consecrator in order to communicate the divine power and grace of apostolic preaching to the bishop-elect. The original symbolism has acquired another meaning: the bishop receives the Gospel together with the Holy Spirit. In the beginning the "good news" was not written. It was a living reality confided to the successors of the Apostles, who had received the Holy Spirit for that purpose. The Gospels cannot be understood apart from the Holy Spirit.

We have seen that the imposition of hands is at present the only indispensable ceremony of ordination. It has always been a part of it. However some theologians have asked whether the Church has the power to suppress this rite and replace it by some other "matter." It is very doubtful that such a change is possible, for the imposition of hands, an Apostolic practice, has always been the Biblical rite for the transmission of all spiritual power. It also evokes the intervention of divine power, of the hand of Yahweh. There is no proof that the Latin Church ever integrated other complementary ceremonies into the "matter" of the sacrament.

4. THE EFFECTS OF ORDINATION

Ordination produces two effects in the recipient: first, it impresses on his soul an indelible spiritual power, the sacramental character of Orders; and secondly, it provides him with sacramental grace. This is an increase of sanctifying grace which ought to make the ordained priest a worthy minister of the sacraments and a faithful servant of the Gospel. The ordination prayers, as we have seen, lay more stress upon sacramental grace than upon the power of Orders. These prayers expatiate upon the various aspects assumed by sacramental grace in the different orders.

REFLECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Our first remark concerns vocabulary. The word "priest" translates two different Greek New Testament words ἱερεὺς (*hiereus*) and πρεσβύτερος (*presbyteros*) and two Latin words in the Vulgate: *sacerdos* and *presbyter*. This requires thorough explanation.

Presbyteros originally signified "elder." The presbyter was an elder of the community to whom the first Apostles had granted their powers. The word *presbyteros* designating the new heads of com-

munities or ministers of worship is characteristic of the New Testament; whereas the word *hiereus* was traditionally used to designate men invested with priestly power whether in the Jewish or pagan religions. Where there has been any danger of confusion, we have translated the words *hiereus* and *sacerdos* by "priestly man," and the words *presbyteros* and *presbyter* by "presbyter."

In the Church there is on the one hand *only one* "priestly man," namely Christ; and since *all* Christians are members of Christ by their Baptism they are that "priestly man." On the other hand, only *some* of these Christians are "presbyters." Let us see what this means.

The Apostles and the Fathers of the early Church were keenly aware of the prerogatives of Christ and of the originality of the Christian religion. The Church, for them, was "an essentially heavenly reality, a gift from above in every way, and concerned with heavenly things" (Y. Congar, "Remarques critiques sur un essai de théologie sur le sacerdoce catholique de M. l'abbé Long-Hasselmanns," in *Revue des Sciences religieuses*, April, 1951, pp. 187-199, and July, 1951, pp. 270-304, p. 299). And Jesus Christ is our one Mediator. According to the Epistle to the Hebrews, written with the sole purpose of showing the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old, there is only one "priestly man," whereas the "priestly men" of the Old Covenant formed a long succession (7:23). To sum up: "the Law appoints as priests men who are weak; but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son who is forever perfect" (7:28). Jesus Christ, the Anointed of the Holy Spirit, is our one and only Savior, our one Mediator, our one "Priestly Man."

These prerogatives of our religion had to find expression in human speech. We have already seen, in connection with the Mass, that the first Christians claimed they had no *altar* (see p. 178 above and Y. Congar, "Remarques critiques," *art. cit.*, July, 1951, p. 298). They also declared they did not have several sacrifices, or several offerings. Likewise they said they had no temples, but only places of assembly or convocation (the word *ecclesia* signifies the convocation or assembly before designating the place where this gathering comes together). Finally, they went to great pains never to designate ministers of the Church by the terms *hiereus* or *archiereus*, which signify "priestly men" in Scripture.

The priests of the New Covenant were to be designated by new

terms, borrowed from secular speech: *Episcopos*, which signifies "overseer" (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7); *Presbyteros*, which signifies "elder" or "eldest" (Acts 11:30; 14:22; 15:2; I Tim. 5:17; Tit. 1:5; Jas. 5:14; I Pet. 5:1,5; II Jn. 1; III Jn. 1); *Hégoumenos*, which signifies "superior" or "leader" (Acts 15:22; Heb. 13:7,17,24); *Proestos*, which signifies "president" (I Thess. 5:12; I Tim. 5:17).

These prerogatives also had to find expression in liturgical rites. The anointing, which was the sacred rite that made priests in the Old Law, was given only at Baptism. The Church anointed Christians at their Baptism, but did not anoint her priests and bishops. She ordained these latter by an imposition of hands. We see that the use of holy oil for ordinations began in Brittany and Gaul about the sixth century (see the cited thesis of Long-Hasselmans, and Father Congar's critical comments). Even in our own time the consecration of the holy chrism on Holy Thursday makes no mention of this usage, except for the anointing of neophytes. As for the white garment which is the priestly garment "among the Jews, the Egyptians, the Germanic peoples, the Greeks, the Romans, etc." (Long-Hasselmans, *op. cit.*, July, 1951, p. 272), it is also given at Baptism, according to Durandus of Mende (*Rationale*, VI, 83), as a mark of their priesthood. However we have no record of its having been given in the primitive Church to the presbyters, who, on the contrary, had no distinctive garment either in ordinary life or in the exercise of their liturgical functions.

These remarks on vocabulary and rites are very important from two points of view: one general, and the other particular.

On the one hand, our religion is essentially *sacramental*. The "reality" of our offering exists first of all in heaven. The same is true of the "reality" of the One whom we offer. The "reality" of our "altar" is in heaven, and is also the "reality" of our priesthood. Here on earth the Church offers only the sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ. She possesses only the sacrament of the Host who was offered up on Calvary and never ceases showing the Father the stigmata of His sacrifice. She builds altars only in order to symbolize this "sublime altar" that resides in the heart of Christ and that is spiritual, just as the offering itself is principally spiritual.

The "reality" is beyond what we see and touch. Even when signs are spiritually efficacious, we touch only *signs* and not the reality they signify. The "reality" is spiritual, and in part eschato-

logical. We must always see "under the multiple species of the Eucharistic wafers, the one Victim; under the species of the tables, the sublime altar; under the species of the ministers, the Eternal Priest; and lastly in the repeated gestures of offering, the one sacrifice" (Congar, *op. cit.*, April, 1951, p. 199).

On the other hand, with regard to the priesthood in particular, the official ministry of the presbyter is not the only way of sharing in Christ's priesthood. It may be shared in two ways: by Baptism and ordination. The first confers upon the Christian his personal *dignity* and his character as an eternal member of Christ. The second gives a *function* to the baptized Christian. Although generally critical of Father Long-Hasselmanns' far-fetched thesis, Father Congar writes: "There is profound truth in Abbé Long-Hasselmann's position. The dignity, inasmuch as it is personal, is common to all. It is acquired by the Baptism that makes us members of Christ and by the anointing that signifies our priestly character. But the body of which we are members is an organized body, in which different members are constituted by a sacred act of the Church into different offices or duties with a view to different functions. The function is called *λειτουργία*, *munus* (and also *officium*). The office or duty is called *τάξις*, *ordo*, *honor* (and likewise *officium*)" ("Remarques critiques," *art. cit.*, July, 1951, p. 291).

But Father Congar remarks (*ibid.*, p. 203), that this aspect of the priesthood-as-function and service to a community has been "greatly confused by the idea of the priesthood-as-personal-dignity inhering in the consecrated individual." Father Long-Hasselmanns has the merit of having revived this concept of priestly dignity.

The "priesthood" of which Father Congar is speaking—the priesthood in the sense that only a few members of the Church possess it, those whom we have called presbyters—is essentially a function in the body of the Church and not an interior state conferring a special personal dignity. When the Church excluded the Blessed Virgin from the "priestly order" (the order of the presbyters) she never intended to detract in any way from Mary's interior and spiritual perfection. The theology of the Blessed Virgin has always rendered great service to the theology of the "presbyterium," because it taught the truth that the priesthood of the Christian presbyter can only be a function in the Church (see Laurentin, *Marie, L'Église et le sacerdoce*, Vol. I, Paris, 1953, pp. 122-128).

Moreover we have proof of it in the way the primitive Church understood what we now call "priestly vocations."

The Church entrusted the duties of the presbyterate or episcopate to those who seemed to her most capable and who were accepted by the community. "After Peter, Paul, and James had evangelized a city and banded a few faithful together, they would, before leaving, gather these faithful together, consult the assembly, fast and pray. Then they would choose the most respected man among them and impose hands upon him. This man had never thought of being a presbyter, but no one asked him about his attraction to this function. The Church needed a priestly organ: this man was qualified to become such an organ. The head of the Church called him and the sacrament ordained him to this role. See Acts 14:22; Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salvetur*, 42:2, P.G. 9, 648. Cyprian, elected a priest and then a bishop against his will, chose to go in hiding; but his house was surrounded" (Long-Hasselmans, *op. cit.*, July, 1951, p. 279).

These elections, which we would now call "forced vocations," were common in the first centuries of the Church. Ambrose, while still a catechumen and not yet baptized, was elected bishop of Milan against his wishes. Germain, although a married man, was elected bishop of Auxerre, and Hilary was likewise made bishop of Poitiers. Augustine, a monk, was dragged from his solitude to become a priest. Gregory Nazianzan, Martin, Paulinus, Gregory the Great, Remi who was "kidnapped rather than elected" according to the Breviary, Nicholas of Myra, etc, were all appointed in the same way. Although St. Paul declared that it is "good to aspire to the episcopate," no one seems to have acceded to the priesthood at his own request.

The case of Bishop Synesius of Cyrene (fifth century) is rare but particularly significant. Synesius was a philosopher who loved only philosophy. He was married and unbaptized, still very much of a pagan. But he defended his city courageously against the barbarian invader, and was the trusted friend of all. Thus Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, thought of him for the see of Cyrene when it fell vacant. Synesius refused as long as he could, but ended by giving in. His acceptance struck the bishops of the East "as being such a tremendous gain for the Christians that, putting aside all scruples, they allowed him to keep his wife and children" (M.

Villemain, cited by M. Meunier, "Prolegomènes" to *Hymnes de Synésius de Cyrène*, Paris, Ed. du Bativre, 1947, p. 59).

The practice of "nominating" future priests for the needs of the community was very common in monasteries as elsewhere. St. Benedict prescribed that the abbot was to choose one of his monks whom he deemed worthy of that charge (Rule, Ch. 62). But generally the priesthood aroused only repugnance in monks, whose vocation was to a life of solitude and retirement, and who used every ruse to escape the bishops. Cassian echoes this tradition, denouncing the "frequentation of women and of bishops as being equally perilous, both having the same deplorable effect: wresting the monk from the silence of his cell and the purity of his contemplation, the first by idle chatter under the guise of direction, the other in exposing him to the temptation of promotion to orders" (Dom Winandy, "Les moines et le sacerdoce," in *La Vie Spirituelle*, January, 1949, p. 25).

This attitude toward promotion to orders seems to have died out among the monks of the Latin Church. However certain ceremonial traces of it remain. Among the Friars Preachers for example, the provincial designates the brethren who are to be ordained, and imposes ordination upon them as a formal command. But it is hardly more than a formality, since the "vocation" and complete willingness of the subject have already been tested. Among the Cistercians, on the contrary, the abbot calls to orders whom he wills, whenever he wills.

Nevertheless, there still remains a capital difference between the priestly and the religious states. The latter is an interior call of the Holy Spirit to follow the Lord's counsels of perfection: to sell his earthly goods, strip himself of everything, not get married, and to follow the Lord under the vow of obedience wherever He may lead. It is an interior and *personal call* which can be recognized by the Church's ministers, but which they themselves cannot give. The priesthood on the other hand is a *social function* of the Church, that must be transmitted by the hierarchy. It is necessary for the life of the Church, and she can transmit it in whatever manner she deems best.

It goes without saying that in speaking thus we make a formal distinction between the priesthood and celibacy. It is a fact that in the Latin Church celibacy is bound up with the priesthood and even with the subdiaconate. But this has never been the case in the

Eastern Church, whether Catholic or Orthodox. The Latin custom simply means that the Church, in her legitimate solicitude for the fitting accomplishment of priestly functions, has joined an essential element of the religious life to the priesthood. From the very beginning, at least in the West, reformers of the clergy have appeared, preaching the evangelical counsels to priests. Many bishops have given the example and lived among their priests, following a religious rule and obeying the counsel of poverty. The cloisters that still surround certain cathedrals bear witness to this mode of life during the Middle Ages. But this custom is older than the Middle Ages, and we can cite examples of it during Apostolic times (see "Moines et chanoines," *La Vie Spirituelle*, January, 1949, pp. 50-69). Moreover, it has always had holy apostles to preach the spirit of this practice. It seems that in the ninth century and again in the eleventh, the integral religious life, as urged by certain reformers, was all but imposed upon the clergy as a whole. However, even though in our own day only celibacy is required, this is an element of the religious life imposed upon the clergy. And this signifies that in the Latin Church the "priestly vocation" likewise implies a special call by the Holy Spirit which the bishop merely verifies but does not impose.

Whether a priest remains a celibate or gets married, it is a fact that the priesthood is primarily a function, while the priesthood of the faithful is an interior and spiritual state. (See on this subject, Y. Congar, *Lay People in the Church* [Newman, 1957], and also J. Lécuyer, "Essai sur le sacerdoce des fidèles chez les Pères," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 27, pp. 7-50). This is not to deny that the official priesthood involves an interior grace meant to help the priest in the fulfillment of his duties, but it means that the function comes first. The spiritual power that it necessarily presupposes, and the grace that attunes the person endowed with this power with the things he does, and that attunes what he does with what he is, are defined in terms of his function. The priestly "vocation" demands aptitudes for a certain function, as well as a desire for holiness and a call of the Holy Spirit to evangelical perfection.

Who gives the function and the power to the priest? While the "priesthood" is a function, there are two ways of looking at the power it presupposes, in relation to the priesthood of the laity. According to one point of view, the power of the "priest" would be included in the priesthood of the laity, and would be, as it were, a

particular emanation of it. According to another view, the priestly power of the ordained priest and of the layman are two *different* ways of sharing in the priesthood of Christ. According to the first idea, the community of the faithful would possess in itself and by itself the powers of "Orders" and it would delegate certain of its own members for functions necessary to the body of the Church. Since according to this notion the power of the ordained priest is no different from that possessed by the baptized layman, the nomination of presbyters would provide them with a new function, but not with any new power. This is the Protestant conception. According to the Catholic view, on the other hand, the presbyter does not derive his powers from the community in any way. He receives them from Christ through the intermediary of the Apostles and their successors.

"The Protestant idea sees the heavenly or spiritual Christ forming His body directly, and that body providing itself with ministerial organs on the basis of the absolute, priestly equality of the faithful. The Catholic notion sees the historical Christ instituting an apostolic ministry, entrusted with the celebration of the visible sacraments of His *acta et passa in carne*, of His Pasch. And the body thus constituted would be joined to its celestial head. The entire work of the Church and of the apostolic ministry in it is to produce the fruit of the Pasch brought about by Christ in the flesh" (Y. Congar, "Remarques critiques," *art. cit.*, July 1951, p. 295).

In other words, we communicate with the heavenly Christ only in the sacraments of the Incarnate Christ. As long as we are under the regime of signs and figures, of the *sacramenta*, as long as we do not have the fullness of the "reality" that the sacraments gradually obtain for us, there are two ways of sharing in Christ's priesthood and these do not overlap, because we are wayfarers. We share in the reality of the eternal life of Christ the Priest; and we share in His priesthood as the cause and the sacrament of grace. The first participation is that of the spiritual-real priesthood of the members of Christ, according to which "all the faithful are priests." The second is the ministerial-sacramental priesthood of Orders, according to which only certain ones are priests. These are two different modes of participation in Christ, through which we are configured to Him either in the depths of our personal life as His friends, or simply as causes and associates in His work (Y. Congar, "Remarques critiques," *art. cit.*, July, 1951, p. 294). The ministers of

the hierarchy—or more precisely the pastoral function of the episcopate—are organs that Christ instituted prior to the Body in order to form the Body: “They are not organs that the Body would provide for itself after it had become a living reality quickened by the Holy Spirit.”

The theology of the priesthood is based on different sources depending on whether it is dealing with this spiritual-real priesthood of baptized Christians or with the ministerial-sacramental priesthood of the ordained priests. The Epistle to the Hebrews is the fundamental source on the priesthood of the faithful, whereas we must seek the foundations of the sacramental priesthood principally in the Gospels and Acts. As Canon Masure remarks, “Despite an oratorical tradition that is worthy of respect, we must not look to the Epistle to the Hebrews for the definition of the individual and personal Catholic priesthood, whose origins and essence we are seeking” (“Sacerdoce,” in *Masses ouvrières*, May, 1953, pp. 19-20).

To sum up, it is true that the baptized Christian has a real participation in the priestly power of Christ and His Church, and that together they form a “royal priesthood” (I Pet. 2:9). However the presbyter, i.e., the one whom we simply call the “priest,” possesses *another* power that is not included in his Baptism and that is not conferred upon him by the community of the faithful. This power of the ordained priest is a different participation in the priesthood of Christ, which he receives from the apostolic ministry instituted by Christ (see on this subject, Y. Congar, *op. cit.*).

For all that, we must not think that there is no natural bond between the priestly power and the community. The whole tradition of the Church, including that written into her liturgy, would rise up against a notion of a hierarchy which took no account of consent or advice or comprehension on the part of the faithful. The first “monition” of the bishop at the ordination of a priest indicates a consultation of the people on the choice of the candidates: “We should ask the opinion of the people. And you, speak frankly of what you know of their deeds and actions, and what you think of their merit.”

The principle of episcopal election was long recognized either in fact, or at least by law: “Let him be ordained bishop who has been chosen by all the people . . . with the consent of all, let them (the bishops) impose hands on him.” So writes Hippolytus in his *Apostolic Tradition*. Possidius, in his life of St. Augustine, reports that

the great bishop judged that in priestly and clerical ordinations the consent of the Christians and the customs of the Church were to be followed (P.L. 32,51). Father Congar marshals a number of similar witnesses in his "research on the concrete tradition of the Church" with regard to nominations to posts. In the Church there is not a twofold authority, but a single "regime of living consent." It is therefore possible for the community to choose or designate a candidate, but it is never the community that "ordains" the one actually chosen. The greater cannot come from the lesser, and the priesthood of the ordained priest has a power that the community of the baptized does not possess.

It is a stable power, ordained to and defined by a specific function, and subject in its exercise to the members of the higher degrees of the hierarchy. And indeed the one who possesses this power can be forbidden to use it (such is the case for example of "reduction to the lay state"); but he can never be deprived of it. Even an excommunicated priest can validly administer the sacraments to persons in danger of death.

Differentiation of the function. The sacramental-ministerial function that Christ has entrusted to certain members of His Church is differentiated into various particular functions and degrees. This is not to say that all functions exercised in the Church pertain to the sacrament of Orders, for there are many other duties which are not sacramental. Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* already pointed out an essential difference between the ordination of a bishop, a priest, or a deacon, and the institution of widows, lectors, virgins, and subdeacons. The former were ordained by the imposition of hands, the others were simply appointed to their various duties.

So too, later on in the East, there were exorcists, cantors, as well as confessors, virgins and deaconesses (*Apost. Const.*). Pseudo-Ignatius also mentions cantors, porters, *fossore*s, κοπιῶντας, exorcists, and confessors. St. Epiphanius puts the exorcists, interpreters (of tongues), *fossore*s, porters, and all the ministers established for good discipline, after the virgins. But all of these "ministers" were not regarded as being in orders.

The *Apostolic Constitutions* are explicit on this point: The confessor is not ordained . . . , the widow is not ordained . . . , the exorcist is not ordained. The early Graeco-Byzantine Church always distinguished between Orders properly so-called, conferred by imposition of the bishop's hands, χειροτονία or χειροθεσία, and digni-

ties or ecclesiastical functions conferred on clerics already constituted in Orders either by simple appointment or by a rite which included the imposition of hands but without the conferring of Orders properly so-called" (A. Michel, art. "Ordre," in *Dict. théol. cath.*, Vol. II, col. 1232-1233). The former receive a sacramental order (*ordo secundum quod est sacramentum*). The others are invested with a function and promoted to a certain rank in view of that function (*ordo secundum quod est officium*).

The whole Tradition of the Church in the East and the West compels us to see in the power conferred upon bishops, priests, and deacons, a sacramental-ministerial power. Each of these degrees, according to its rank, shares in the hierarchical priesthood entrusted by Christ to His Church. The other degrees and functions which have varied so greatly in different epochs, Churches, and even in different religious Orders (the Carthusian liturgy still does not have a subdeacon at Solemn Mass) are at least sacramentals (see Congar, "Remarques critiques," *op. cit.*, July, 1951, p. 297). But that is about as much as we can say. We certainly cannot say, as did certain twelfth-century theologians, that consecrated virginity is a sacrament. There is a certain hesitation on the subject of the hierarchy of "seven orders" in the Latin Church. This hierarchy has varied a great deal in the past, and it still differs from the hierarchy of the Eastern (Catholic) Church. Besides, the seven orders do not include the episcopate, which traditionally represents the fullness of the priesthood. In an effort to reach the number nine, (at which Pseudo-Dionysius hints), some theologians add the two highest degrees: bishop and archbishop. It may well be wondered what significance we should attribute to these numbers.

Be this as it may, it would surely be contrary to the Tradition of the Church to make such a strong distinction between sacraments and sacramentals that the latter would be counted for nought or be deprived of their efficacy and their Eucharistic meaning (the "Reflections" following Chapter I, "The Sacraments in General," p. 29 ff.). There is a profound interrelationship between sacraments and sacramentals, because they are all ordered to the sacrament of the Eucharist, which is the focal point of the sacramental organism.

But it would be quite as contrary to Tradition not to maintain a distinction on the basis of principles already established. We must maintain this distinction between ecclesiastical functions. The "Order" of the "Apostles," which even in apostolic times was differen-

tiated into the three degrees of bishops, priests, deacons, cannot be assimilated to the order of widows, any more than the latter can be assimilated to that of the cantors. Nor can it be assimilated to the "mandate" that the Hierarchy gives to certain laymen engaged in Catholic Action. Only the Order of the Apostles, and its presently accepted differentiations can with certainty be considered as a sacrament. The "Apostolate" (episcopate-priesthood-diaconate) possesses a spiritual power received from Christ, which enables it to communicate the spiritual goods received from the Kingdom under the veil of sensible signs: i.e., those signs which correspond to what we call the sacraments.

We can now understand the theological significance of a sacrament, which is: "A spiritual power over the Body of Christ, whether it be to offer it sacramentally to God after having consecrated it; whether it be to give it to the faithful under the sacramental species; or whether it be to establish it among men, as it were, by means of the Word and the sacraments of faith." Indeed, there is, as we have seen, a close bond between the Eucharistic Body of Christ and what, since the twelfth century, has been called His "Mystical Body."

The bishop possesses this priestly power in its fullness. The priest receives the power of consecrating the Eucharist from the bishop. But he exercises his power over the Mystical Body of Christ only under the "supervision" of the bishop who can restrict or enlarge his functions. (Study from this point of view the origins and the meaning of "the priesthood of monks." Concerning the famous bulls *Sacrae religionis* [1400], *Exposcit* [1489], to which should be added *Gerentes ad vos* [1427], which gave priests the power to confer major orders, including the priesthood, see Y. Congar, "Faits, problèmes et réflexions à propos du pouvoir d'ordre et des rapports entre le presbytérat et l'épiscopat," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 14, pp. 107-128).

As for the diaconate, it is at the immediate service of the *presbyterium*, that is, of the community composed by the bishop and his priests. Present-day law grants the deacon the power to baptize officially and to preach. (Note: there is question here only of deacons. Deaconesses never had this power in the Church, nor can they be assimilated to the "diaconate" of which we are now speaking.)

In order to understand how the priestly function has been ex-

exercised—both its first degree (episcopate) and its second degree (presbyterate)—apart from the Eucharistic celebration and in view of this celebration, we would have to inquire into the history of the different Churches, both of the East and West, from their origins until our own time. We would discover a great variety of ministries, ranging from the most worldly (defense of the city, holding of public office) to the most spiritual (the liturgical celebration of the divine office, preaching, spiritual direction of souls, etc.). In every epoch, the priesthood—of the first and second degree—has been the Church's official guardian of the faith and of the sacraments of the faith. However it has not "preserved" the faith as in a museum, for this would have been impossible—the faith is a living reality. It has preserved it by transmitting it through the spoken Word and through the sacraments.

In going through this vast forest of the history of the Christian priesthood, almost unexplored until now, we shall do no more than blaze the trail of research still to be done and offer a few guideposts on the way.

The Institution of the Priesthood in France

1. THE RECRUITMENT OF PRIESTS AND BISHOPS

a. *Bishops*. From what social circles have bishops been chosen through the centuries? From among nobles or commoners? From among Frenchmen or foreigners? From among cultured persons, holders of university degrees, or from among unlettered folk? From monasteries or the secular clergy? Whence the increasingly widespread custom which has become universal in France, of naming only "secular" priests to head dioceses? Guidepost: according to the Pragmatic Sanction (1438), the king of France had the privilege of nominating the heads of episcopal sees. In practice, the choice gradually was limited to the nobility, which took full advantage of it.

On the eve of the French Revolution, almost all the bishoprics were in the hands of the great noble families of France, and some bishops managed to acquire along with their episcopal sees several abbeys *in commendam*. The nobility, which hardly ever entered the religious orders except through the *commendam*, in order to profit economically from them, became accustomed to regarding the episcopate as a secular charge and the bishop as a sort of feudal lord.

In the seventh and tenth centuries bishops were usually chosen from monasteries: Cluny furnished many of them. In the East to-day, bishops are still chosen exclusively from among monks. Recommended study: the advantages and disadvantages of the choice of seculars and of monks for the episcopate. Modes of recruitment: popular election, election by the clergy, nomination by a king, nomination by the pope, etc.

b. *The simple Priesthood.* When was the "vocation to the priesthood" first spoken of? What signs were required for that "vocation"? What aptitudes were expected of the one selected for the priestly office (ability to chant, leadership, etc.)? What knowledge was required (ability to read and write, the memorization of certain books of Scripture like the Psalms, knowledge of the "cases" inscribed in the Penitentials, etc.)? What has been the ratio to the population of priests, whether "regular" or "secular," serving local Churches in various epochs? Were there certain minor clerics not elevated to the priesthood but who had stable functions? What was this function? How well educated were they? How did they earn their livelihood? Where did they live? Were some of them married?

2. THE FORMATION OF PRIESTS AND BISHOPS

a. *Bishops.* Were the theological attainments of future bishops examined? From what period does the "examination" which still figures in the "Pontifical" date? How were these first examinations conducted?

b. *Clerics.* Who was responsible for the instruction of the clergy before the first "seminaries" (sixteenth century)? Books upon which this formation was based; kind of study (scriptural, liturgical, theological, canonical, before the Code of Canon Law, etc.); the cultural level of the clergy as compared with the cultural environment of the period; periodic examination of priests—origin, procedure; homogeneity or heterogeneity of the "profane" culture of the layman and the culture of the churchman. To what did ordination to the priesthood oblige one? Nature of the bond of obedience relative to the bishop and to the civil power.

3. HIERARCHY AND JURISDICTION

What is an "individual Church"? Origin of the expression. Varied extent of an individual Church. Origin of the expression "title" of a Church; its meaning and importance. On the individual Church,

read: Dom Gréa, *De l'Église et de sa divine constitution*, Vol. I and II, Paris, 1907; Dom Benoit, *La vie des clercs dans les siècles passés*, Paris, 1914; A.-M. Henry, "Charité et Communauté," in *Supplément to La Vie Spirituelle*, February, 1949, pp. 363-393. From the point of view of present-day legislation, read: J. F. Noubel, "L'Église diocésaine, sa construction juridique actuelle," in *L'Année Canonique*, 1952, Vol. I, pp. 141-174, and especially Vol. I, "Episcopat et Eglises particulières," pp. 143-147.

What is a diocese? Origin and evolution of the word. Evolution of the territorial jurisdiction of bishops. (See J. Colson, "Qu'est-ce qu'un diocèse?" in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, May, 1953, pp. 471-497. Father Colson distinguishes three historical types of local Churches: 1) The Pauline type, in which the head of the Church was the head of "acephalous communities" whose heads were only ministers of second rank, i.e., presbyters, *didascali*, pastors, presidents, pilots, and that were constituted into a Church only by their relationship to a bishop who, as the successor of the Apostles, was the center of their unity in Jesus Christ; 2) the Johannine type that was monarchical and sedentary, in which "the Christian community of each city had at its head a bishop, concentrating in his person the powers of the Apostolic succession, surrounded by a college of priests and deacons." This second type was the classic model of the bishoprics of antiquity when every "city" had its own bishop. In northern Africa at the time of Augustine, there were more than five hundred bishops. 3) The modern type which may be realized in two ways: (a) The bishop may be the "apostolic overseer" of an entire region without being the special bishop of this or that city. (This is general today, at least outside Italy where dioceses of the older type persist.) (b) The bishop, while being the head of a specific city, also has the mandate of "apostolic supervision" over the surrounding region as well.

How powerful is the bond binding a bishop to his territory? According to J. F. Noubel, "present ecclesiastical law did not establish an indissoluble bond between the bishop and his particular Church except in the case of the Pope and the Church of Rome" (*op. cit.*, p. 146).

The parish. Origins of the word and of the institution (see F. Claeys Bouuaert, in *Traité de Droit canonique*, Paris, Letouzey et Ané, 1948, Vol. I, p. 505 ff.). Territorial extension of the parish. Groupings of parishes: deans, jurisdiction of archdeacons, etc. His-

tory and evolution of urban and rural parishes. Development of the bonds between rural parishes and the mother church of the diocese. The history of collegiate churches. (There are few monographs, at least in France, on the history of parishes. However, read the valuable work of Laugardière, *L'Église de Bourges avant Charlemagne*, Bourges, Tardy, 1951. English ecclesiastical literature furnishes other indications. See in particular: J. C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England* (London, S.P.C.K. House, 1950) and its bibliography. On pastoral problems of the parish, see in particular "Problèmes de la paroisse," in *La Maison-Dieu*, No. 36, 4th quarter, 1953.

Has the hierarchy always been bound to a territory? Have there been nomadic bishops who moved about with their flock and who were bound to them but not to a particular place? On this aspect of the matter, study the history of the Irish missionary bishops, *Episcopi ad praedicandum*, from the sixth to the twelfth centuries, and their external apostolic missions.

Exceptions old and new to the principle of the one bishop (and of the one Church) over a single territory: the bishop of the "foreigners," the "bishop of the Ukrainians" in Latin- and English-speaking territories; patriarchs of different rites co-existing in the same city, etc. Can it be said that the diocese is first of all a "people," and secondarily the place which in a certain respect *determines* the people geographically, ethnologically, linguistically, and legislatively? Or should it be said that the diocese is first the place and then the people living there? Inasmuch as territory has less and less determining influence on man, especially in large cities, as a result of the great increase in communications all over the earth, does not the diocese appear to be an artificial administrative division? Which natural and necessary elements are permanent and which tend to disappear? Does territory regain its determining values when it covers a wider area than the diocese? Or when it covers a smaller area? Specify what these values are.

Reflect on the problem raised at the present time in Christian lands, namely, the fact that the Church is hierarchically established and deeply rooted over all the *territories* of Christian countries, but certain social groups, or at least certain classes escape her control, regardless of the territory in which these groups or classes are located. What apostolic means does Tradition offer the Church in facing this problem?

What degrees of the hierarchy have existed in various epochs, and exist today in the East and in the West? The exact value (honorific and jurisdictional) of certain degrees in the West (patriarch, primate, archbishop, archdeacon, archpriest, dean, etc.).

By way of a guide and also for purposes of comparison, here are the jurisdictions and hierarchical degrees of the Eastern Churches today. We have put in parentheses those that concern the separated Orthodox Churches.

a. *Patriarchates*. The legislation of Justinian (Code J. IV, 29; Nov. 126, c. 3; 131) sanctioning the decisions of the Council of Constantinople (381) and Chalcedon (451) divides the Church into five autonomous patriarchates under the primacy of the Roman Pontiff. In addition to the three Apostolic Sees of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, Constantinople and Jerusalem were added in 381 and 451 respectively.

The same autonomy is recognized for the episcopal see of Cyprus.

The "Catholicos" of Seleucia-Ctesiphon (The Persian Church established in 410 which later became Nestorian), and those of Armenia (fourth century) and Georgia (sixth century) can also be considered as enjoying the plenitude of jurisdiction over their Churches.

In 927, the pope recognized the Archbishop of the Bulgarians as a patriarch (this patriarchate disappeared in 1767). In 1326, Constantinople did the same for the Serbian Archbishop of Ipeks (this patriarchate was reconstituted in 1920). In 1589, the Archbishop of Moscow was recognized as a patriarch. In 1925, the independence of the Orthodox Church of Rumania, which had been recognized since 1885 by the institution of a patriarchate at Bucharest, was approved. Modern legislation of the Orthodox Church recognizes the autonomy (autocephalia) of every national Church.

Through the centuries schisms have multiplied the patriarchal sees of the East. The most typical case is the creation of the Maronite patriarchate of Lebanon (eighth century).

The patriarchates united to Rome have seen the progressive restriction of their jurisdictional autonomy, especially since the Bull of Pius IX to the Armenian patriarchate (1867). In the majority of cases the election of the bishops must be confirmed by the Holy See. The legislative powers are subject to the same control.

b. *The intermediary hierarchy*. As in the West, the jurisdiction

of the archbishops and metropolitans was finally absorbed by the patriarchial jurisdiction, and these titles are now merely honorary.

(We must point out the role of the "mafrian" in the [Jacobite] Church of Antioch, whose role was to be the delegate of the patriarch for communities situated beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire—the title has been resumed to designate the head of the Jacobite Church of the Indies. The Coptic Church extended its jurisdiction until recent years over all of Ethiopia through the intermediary of a "vicar" known as the "Abouna.")

The Maronite Church has retained up to our own time its ecclesiastical supervisors and its archpriests who enjoy certain pontifical rights.

c. *Minor Orders.* With the exception of the Armenian Church, which adopted Latin orders in the Middle Ages, the Eastern Churches recognize no minor orders except those of cantor and lector-acolyte, to which they add the subdiaconate.

4. DWELLING, DRESS, LIVELIHOOD, MODE OF LIFE, AND CIVIL FUNCTIONS

Extent to which the bishop lives a common life with his priests: Do they live under the same roof? Do they eat together? Do they recite the office in choir? Do they live a life according to a "religious" rule?

The origins of the "episcopal palace." The personnel of the bishopric: serfs, servants, lay religious (oblates, for example), clerics. Various roles.

In localities where the common life was not established, where did the priests of the city live? Alone? With their families? In luxury? In poverty? Where did future priests live?

What do bishops wear? What insignia do they wear (the origins of the crosier, the ring, the archbishop's pallium, etc.). The clothing worn by priests and the lower clergy. Origins of distinctive dress. Are bishops and priests shown marks of honor or consideration? Origins of the words "Pontiff," "Lord," "Provost," etc. Origins of certain honors rendered to bishops (and priests): incense, genuflexion, kissing the ring, etc.

How do bishops cover their expenses? The origins of their revenue (from the State, the Church, personal or family income). How do priests cover their expenses? The value of "titles" to local Churches. Who distributes revenue to priests and clerics? (The

State, the bishop?) Upon whom does the cost of educating and maintaining clerics and future priests devolve? Do bishops, priests, deacons, and inferior clerics engage in lucrative work?

Do the bishop and priest have a position and a role in secular society? What are the secular equivalents of the various titles given to bishops since the sixteenth century ("My Lord"—Italy, sixteenth century, and imposed in France by Richelieu in the seventeenth century; "Your Grace"—end of the seventeenth century, and eighteenth century; relative influence of the Napoleonic Reform which recognized only the title "Monsieur" in its code of law; "Your Excellency": recently introduced in Italy and then in France. Origins of the simple "The Most Reverend Father" used in Anglo-Saxon lands)? What responsibility did public office entail for the clergy in those countries and epochs in which this was customary?

Are bishops and priests considered as authorized representatives of the communities to which they belong? Have they ever declared war (Ireland; Frankish bishops against the Norman invasion)? Have they ever made peace (St. Albert the Great)? Institutions of peace founded by bishops. Does the priest have a part in the "common destiny" of the people among whom he lives, does he share their political and social passions? The manner in which the bishop or priest is dependent upon the king and on public authority. Under what influences was the doctrine that "the priest is a separated man" formulated and disseminated in the sixteenth century, to the detriment of the doctrine that the priest is "one with his people"? The dialectics of these two positions through the course of history. What political opinions did the majority of bishops and priests profess during the French Monarchy, during the Revolution, the Empire, and the nineteenth century?

The functions exercised by the clergy to make up for deficiencies in secular organizations: hospitals, schools, wars (crusades), the defense of communities, civil administration, etc. The origin, purpose, and various activities of the "companies of priests" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

5. MINISTRIES

The daily life of bishops and priests in various epochs: time devoted to divine worship. Do priests say Mass every day? Several times a day? Do they concelebrate on Sunday? Choral office. Chant.

Various ministries. (See Vol. IV, of the *Theology Library* "Pastoral Responsibility," pp. 700-707.)

Coordination of apostolic activities. What is the nature of the relationship between the bishop and his priests from the apostolic point of view? What share of initiative and responsibility has been left to the priests? Is the apostolic activity of the bishop limited to his own territory, and is this territory always clearly defined?

History of the foreign missions launched by the bishops without asking permission of the Holy See (Irish and Scandinavian missions). Does the clergy have a missionary concern for the pagans that surround the Church, or is it not more concerned with presiding over the Christian community and being entirely devoted to it? During the early centuries of the Church it seems that the clergy usually followed the Christian community when it was constituted in a given territory, but that it did not precede this community (cf. the opinion of Canon Bardy in *Prêtres d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*, (Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1954).

What is the role of the laity in the apostolate, worship, and the administration of churches? Preaching: study the development of the interesting expression "*Ordo praedicatorum*" which St. Gregory used exclusively to designate the "collectivity of the bishops." (See R. Ladner, "Le nom et l'idée d'*ordo praedicatorum*," in *Saint Dominique, l'idée, l'homme et l'oeuvre* (Paris, Desclée De Br., 1938, pp. 49-68, and esp. pp. 51-55). What is preached about? How? At what times? On what occasions? In what language? Against what pagan and heretical institutions has the Church had to wage war? (The paganism of the Roman Empire, the Albigensian heresies, the heresies of the sixteenth century: Protestantism, Jansenism, etc.) How has she proceeded?

The priest and the family. Does the priest visit families? Does he take an interest in the home as such, or simply in the persons who compose it? Does he take an interest in children? When does he begin to teach "catechism"? The history of "catechisms" (manuals) and of catechetics (the practical teaching of catechism). Who decides the proper time for a child to make his First Communion?

Works. What have been the various works, confraternities, and societies directed by parish priests in various epochs?

The sacraments. Is Baptism ordinarily given by a bishop, or by a priest or deacon? At what time did priests begin to baptize as a

common practice? At what times of the year are Baptisms conferred? How are catechumens prepared? What is required of the families whose children are to be baptized? When are children confirmed? How is the ceremony celebrated?

The Eucharist. When is it celebrated (Low Masses, sung Masses, and Solemn Masses)? Degrees and frequency of participation (Communion) of the faithful.

Penance. How is the sacrament administered in practice (solemn penance, public penance, private penance)? Frequency of confessions. What penances are given?

Extreme Unction. At what stage of sickness is the priest sent for? Does he visit all the sick regularly? Is this an important part of his ministry?

Matrimony. Where is marriage celebrated? Prior to the Council of Trent was the priest ordinarily invited? Origins of the different "classes" of marriage.

Burial. The priest's role in burial ceremonies. How are bishops, priests and laymen buried?

Rites of Ordination. Origin and history of the different rites of ordination. On the imposition of hands consult J. Morin, *Commentarius de sacris Ecclesiae ordinationibus*, Paris, 1655. "It seems certain that the Apostles, either through Christ's own command or the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, looked to the Jewish rite of ordination for the elements of the Christian ceremony" (A. Michel, art. "Ordre," *Dict. de theol. cath.*, Vol. II, col. 1235). Symbolism of vestments and instruments. Reason for the interruption of singing in the sacramental rite of ordination in the Latin Church. Note the contrary tendency in the Eastern rites. With regard to Baptism, "the tone of the voice in pronouncing the formula must be raised and held on pitch in order to indicate the solemnity of the act" (G. Giamberardini, O.F.M., "La réitération du baptême des coptes qui reviennent à l'unité catholique," in *Proche-Orient chrétien*, April-June, 1953, p. 141).

The spiritual life of the priest. Observances, poverty, "enclosure." Intellectual and manual work. Prayers, devotions, "exercises," mental prayer, silence. Choral prayer and private prayer (duration and nature of obligation). The "particular examen": origins (sixteenth century) and history. Origins and history of the "spirituality of the diocesan clergy." Common life (degrees).

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Chapter VII

MARRIAGE

by A.-M. Henry, O.P.

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Chapter VII

MARRIAGE

I. The Author of Marriage

Marriage was instituted by God. From Genesis to the Apocalypse, the Bible never stops speaking to us of marriage, of its "mystery," its institution, of the meaning God gave it, of its origin and its end. We shall follow the stages of this institution through its history.

1. THE STAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

A. Adam and Eve

All teaching on marriage must start with the account in Genesis 2:18-25. This is a text of the "Yahwist" tradition, hence very primitive and rich in meaning, and one whose Oriental imagery gives us an explanation, by way of woman's origins, of woman's attraction to man, and of the conjugal union:

And the Lord God said: It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him a help like unto himself. And the Lord God having formed out of the ground all the beasts of the earth, and all the fowls of the air, brought them to Adam to see what he would call them: for whatsoever Adam called any living creature the same was its name.

And Adam called all the beasts by their names, and all the fowls of the air, and all the cattle of the field: but for Adam there was not found a helper like himself.

Then the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon Adam: and when he was fast asleep, he took one of his ribs, and filled up flesh for it. And the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman: and brought her to Adam. And Adam said: This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called (*Ishah*) woman, because she was taken out of (*Ish*) man.

Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be two in one flesh. And they were both naked: to wit, Adam and his wife: and were not ashamed.

The following points emerge from the above account:

1. Marriage was instituted by God and not by man. God created man and devised the one who was to be his companion. Both man and woman must therefore submit to what God has conceived and ordained.

2. Man and woman are equal, capable of being profoundly united, and they are complementary.

Their equality is manifested by God's decision to give man a helper like himself and suited to him. Man cannot find this sort of a helper among the animals which are beneath him. But he recognizes himself in the person made from his rib and his flesh. The "rib" signifies moral assistance. Even today the Arabs say: "He is my side, my rib," when they mean to say: "He is my inseparable companion." The expression "bone and flesh" is a Hebraism that signifies a profound unity existing between two beings.

On the other hand, we see that an absolute equality did not exist between Adam and Eve. They were not created at the same time. Adam was made first, and then Eve (I Tim. 2:13). Eve was made to be man's companion, and not inversely. "For man is not from woman, but woman from man. For man was not created for woman, but woman for man" (I Cor. 11:8-9). This suggests that even in the state of original justice, authority in marriage resided in the man, and woman was subject to him. Now man should not be puffed up by a role given him by God, any more than he should evade it. It is not his fault that he is man and that God has decided that he should be the head. Nor does this take any dignity away from the woman. Even though she is not "the head," she is equal to man before God. "For as the woman is from the man, so also is the man through the woman" (I Cor. 11:12).

3. Adam and Eve did not know shame, or fear of sin. Since God had created all things, everything was beautiful in their eyes. In the state of innocence, nothing impaired the integrity of the spirit and the healthy growth of pure love. That is why virginity played no part in it. Adam and Eve would have progressed in love of God as well as in their own mutual love. In educating their children, they would gradually have taught them the full truth about God.

4. Death is the wages of sin. In the state of original justice, there would have been no death. This suggests to us that the fruitfulness of the marital union would have had another goal than that of preserving the species. The multiplication of the children of men would have served to increase the number of souls, or at least a variety of souls, inasmuch as no man alone can exhaust all the resources of humanity; it would also have multiplied the friends of God.

The New Covenant invites us to “read” something more into this Yahwist account. We shall come to that later. For the moment let us continue reading our text after the history of the first sin. To the woman, God said:

I will multiply thy sorrows, and thy conceptions: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee (Gen. 3:16).

The punishment dealt out to man involved toil and earning a living. And since woman had been created for man and to be the mother of the living, her punishment involved her twofold role of wife and mother: she was to bring forth children in sorrow. She was to be drawn to man, and man was to dominate her. Thus was destroyed the harmonious unity that had heretofore existed. The authority of sinful man opened the door to authoritarianism, and the submission of sinful woman tended to strip her of her dignity as an equal unless she rebelled against her condition and rejected her husband's authority.

The whole history of womankind from Eve to our own day has been the history of this pull between an excessive submission—whether forced or not—which is opposed to woman's condition as man's equal and to her personal dignity, and an excessive emancipation—which is contrary to the rank and the function that God has assigned to her. The illegitimate emancipation of woman has boomeranged against her because she was not man. Thus, in wanting to assume typically masculine functions that call for physical strength, a male voice, or the form of “reason” that a man ordinarily possesses, she has only partially succeeded and has been humiliated in the very activities through which she sought to be emancipated. Moreover, she has ceased giving man the benefit of her properly feminine qualities. The woman worthy of praise is the one who fears God and respects what He has instituted.

However it is a remarkable fact that sin did not abolish marriage and the divine blessing attached to it. Despite his sin, man can find in woman the companion and joy of his life; despite the original transgression, both man and woman have retained the power to bring forth life in the name of God. They have inherited the beautiful titles of father and mother that truly belong to God alone (Mt. 23:9), and from whom all fatherhood and motherhood (i.e. all families) receive their name in heaven and upon earth (Eph. 3:15).

The blessing given at the nuptial Mass calls this to mind in the following terms:

O God, by Thy mighty power Thou hast made all things out of nothing, and set in order the foundation of the universe. After which, thou didst make man in thine own likeness, and appoint to him woman to be his inseparable help-mate, in such wise that the woman's body had its beginning from the rib of the man, thereby teaching that what Thou wast pleased to institute from one principle might never lawfully be put asunder. . . . O God, by whom woman is joined to man, on which fellowship society mainly depends and is endowed with that blessing which alone was never taken away, neither in punishment for original sin, nor by the sentence of the Flood, mayest Thou regard thy hand-maid here present with bounteous kindness.

B. The Canticle of Canticles

The history of marriage after the first sin has always brought out this twofold condition of the marital institution. On the one hand, the institution of marriage was not abolished and continued to enjoy God's favor. But on the other hand, it lost in part the thing that had been its honor and its beauty: husband and wife were now sinners and could not, without divine help, rediscover the harmony of the first couple either between themselves or in their home. The marriages of the Garden of Eden would have been happy marriages. Experience seems to show that successful marriages among sinful men and women have been rare. And even though there is reason to hope that happy marriages are more numerous among Christians, success must be bought at a high price. For the sons of Christians are by nature the children of "wrath" (Eph. 2:3), just like all the others.

By slow and patient teaching God restored the honor of marriage. Under the Old Law, out of consideration for human frailty, He did not forbid repudiation or divorce (Deut. 24:1). Judaism even based on this permission a theory of divorce. But God did not cease for all that to detest the repudiation of the wife of a man's youth (see Mal. 2:16). And Jesus reminded the Pharisees that Moses allowed them to repudiate their wives because of the hardness of their hearts, "but it was not so from the beginning" (Mt. 19:8). When Christ reinstated the honor of marriage, He declared solemnly:

Have you not read that the Creator, from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder. . . . And I say to you, that

whoever puts away his wife, except for immorality, and marries another, commits adultery (Mt. 19:4-6, 9).

But God is a Father. His pedagogy cannot be summed up in a code of precepts, interdictions, and sanctions. Even under the Old Dispensation of the Law He confronted marital love with something very different from the obligation of continual rule-following. He offered husbands and wives the model of His own Love. Far from closing up all the outlets for man's love, He opened up for him an infinite field of possibilities by His own example.

This teaching seems to have begun with Osee (chapters 1-3, and 11); it continued through Ezechiel (ch. 16), Isaias (54:8; 62:3 ff), the Psalms, and especially with the royal epithalamium of Psalm 44. And it found its most beautiful expression during the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ in the Canticle of Canticles. The lesson taught by all these books and by all the prophets who took up this theme is this: God loves His people, He loves them as a husband loves his wife. He has made a covenant with them, and this covenant has been represented to us as a sort of nuptial union.

All the themes and all the figures of marriage: the betrothed couple, the lover's search, the garden, the Desert, affectionate gestures, the beloved's sleep and awakening, a wife's infidelity and a husband's unquenchable love, are utilized by the sacred author to express God's love for His people. Whatever originality the Canticle of Canticles may possess in this matter probably consists in the fact that in it the bonds of love are conceived in a more inward and personal way. For all the prophets spoke of Yahweh's relations with His nation, but it seems that prior to the Canticle there was lacking this accent of personal, individual inwardness that was already an announcement of God's love addressing itself to the soul of each one of us. It is also worth noting that the Covenants sealed by God were sealed in blood (Gen. 17:1-22; Ex. 24:5-8).

Thus the union of Adam and Eve no longer appears as the model which we must constantly look to. It might be better to say that their union is the sign or the figure of a union that God's love yearns to make perfect: the union between Himself and redeemed humanity. God does not treat us as slaves, and is not content simply to give us laws. He speaks to us as a friend, gives us His example, and discloses His plans to us. Soon He will bring us the help of His grace to make His Words efficacious in our hearts.

C. The New Adam and the New Eve

The long preparation of the Old Testament is simply the glorious parable of a more real, more stable, and more fruitful union, the union of the Son of God incarnate, Jesus Christ, and His Church: the union between Him and the whole human race whom He saves by bringing it to birth anew in the baptismal water and by quenching its thirst with the blood that He pours out for her from His pierced side. The whole epic of Christ presents itself as a mystery of nuptial union. He Himself declares He is the Bridegroom (Mt. 9:14-15; 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Jn. 3:7-30), and the Apostles present Christ and the Church to us as the parties to a divine wedding¹ (I Cor. 6:15-16; II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-33; Apoc. 19:7; 21:1-2). Likewise, Baptism, which is admittance into God's people, is a mystery of marriage. It is in truth the nuptial bath² (see Eph. 5:26-27) that precedes the nuptial banquet of the Eucharist.

The long preparations of the Old Testament, that patient idyll of God and humanity in search—if we may say so—of their one being, find their mysterious fulfillment in Christ who is at once the Bridegroom, the vine whose branches we are, and the Head of the body of which we are the members. In Christ the truth of the "mystery" of Adam and Eve, so long kept in obscurity, shines forth in all its splendor. Adam, in the words of St. Paul, was "the figure of him who was to come" (Rom. 5:14). And Tertullian comments on this passage by saying that when God fashioned Adam "He thought of Christ-the-Man, of Christ who was one day to be what this earth and this flesh were."³ And Eve, brought forth from Adam's side, prefigured the new Eve, the Church, brought forth from Christ as He slept on the Cross. Adam and Eve are a mysterious sign, a great sacrament "in reference to Christ and to the Church" (Eph. 5:32).⁴

A great event like the nuptial union of Christ and His Church

¹ On the particular meaning of the wedding feast of Cana, read Father Robillard's beautiful article, "Le vin manqua," in *La Vie Spirituelle*, January, 1954. We might mention in passing that we are deeply indebted to Father Robillard for his splendid (unpublished) course on the theology of marriage which it was our privilege to follow.

² On Baptism as the nuptial bath, cf. O. Casel, "Le bain nuptial de l'Église," in *Dieu-Vivant*, No. 4, pp. 43-49.

³ *De resurr. carnis*, P.L., 2, 802.

⁴ On the "mystery" of Adam and Eve, see our article, "Le mystère de l'homme et de la femme," in *La Vie Spirituelle*, May, 1949, pp. 463-490.

cannot fail to have repercussions on marriage. Since Christ's wedding with the Church has been accomplished, marriage has been supremely honored, and shines forth with a new, unaccustomed beauty. In the Old Testament, marriage was still only a figure, a sign, an allegory of a great mystery of love. Now that God has become man and acquired a bride at the price of His blood, marriage, without being intrinsically changed, is a sacred sign, a sacrament. It has found its model, its ultimate meaning, its remedy, and its succor.

(a) *Marriage under the Old and the New Dispensations*

We must at once note that Christian marriage, even though it has been raised to the dignity of a sacrament, has lost under the New Dispensation a part of its prerogatives and usefulness. It is important to understand this, and an explanation is called for.

The ancient economy was an economy of the Law. Under the Old Law "justice" was a matter of external conformity to the letter of the Law, and religion was a religion of the letter and of external observances. Obviously everything in the Old Law was a preparation for the religion of the spirit—the Law was a teacher, and the prophets already spoke through the Spirit of God. And yet the Old Dispensation as a whole represented an economy that was still carnal and temporal. The promised land, the announcement of sanctions and rewards, the kingdom already granted, were all realities of this world, even though they announced another kingdom to come. The priesthood belonged to a single tribe, the tribe of Levi, and was transmitted from generation to generation. It was also an institution of this world, and marriage was necessary to perpetuate it just as it was necessary to prolong the existence of the people of Israel among pagan nations and to multiply the members of the chosen people, the sons of God. Men belonged to God by virtue of the Law, by observances such as circumcision in particular, and by their race—the race that God Himself had chosen.

The new economy is an economy of the Spirit. Even though from one point of view the kingdom of God is still to come, it has already arrived in the sense that the Spirit has been merited for us by Christ and has now been given to us. Christian marriage can certainly multiply the number of children who will be believers. But its role in this regard has become less important if indeed it has not become secondary, inasmuch as the new people of God is

no longer recruited so much by marriage and generation as by the preaching of the faith. Christian parents who refuse to see that their children are given the light of faith, which the latter moreover have the sad privilege of refusing, can keep them in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief.

Thus in ancient Israel, religion came from the earth in a certain respect. It was communicated by the generating of offspring, by the Law, and by observances. Even the neophytes from outside were gradually assimilated to the Chosen People. Obviously, this was a providory economy, a method of pedagogy; and obviously it ascended toward Christ and toward religion in the Spirit. But in the meantime it came from the earth.

In the Church, however, everything comes from above, from heaven. The Church is the New Jerusalem that has come down from on high, it is the effusion of the Spirit whose well-springs in heaven were opened by Christ and who now pours Himself out profusely upon all flesh. There is no longer any need of a Chosen People, of a special race or family to keep the Church alive, for she does not receive her life from the earth. She comes from on high. She exists in a stable and definitive way in Christ, and every single person on the surface of the globe, regardless of his race or religion, can drink the living water that she pours forth. The kingdom of heaven, which is neither a tribe nor a nation, has been inaugurated upon this earth. Hence marriage is less useful than it was under the Old Law.

(b) *Marriage and Virginity*

The Church, Christ's Bride, is a virgin like Himself. How then can Christian marriage represent this virginity and make it efficacious? Who will be better able to represent the Church, which is a virgin and spouse: the married woman or the virgin consecrated to Christ? And which is the most honored state among Christians?

For it is a fact that the Church is a virgin. What was originally considered by Israel as a privation, an absence, a lack, has gradually appeared as a lack that is particularly attractive in God's eyes, and that God blesses. Was it not because of this "lack" that God blessed so many married women who were sterile at first and to whom He afterward granted a choice lineage? The virginity that is humanly represented by solitude, the lack of human and visible supports, separation—this virginity, because it finds its mainstay in

God alone, was blessed by God and attained spiritual fruitfulness through Him. It was announced and honored by the prophets when the "daughter of Israel"—a Hebraism that simply means the people of Israel—prostituted herself by seeking help either from foreign nations or strange gods, and was invited to become a "virgin" once more by holding to her solitude and her apparent abandonment against the solicitations of strange nations or deities. Her alliance with Yahweh withdrew her from all her prostitutions and made her virginal once more.

So, too, the Church's alliance with God, and specifically in the Christian dispensation her alliance with Christ, bestows upon her, as well as upon Mary, the virginity that God blesses and consecrates. As St. John Chrysostom says, in human relations marriage puts an end to virginity, but in Christ marriage restores virginity. Far from being mutually exclusive, marriage and virginity are really inseparable. That is why we can say with St. Augustine: "Virginity of the flesh belongs to only a few, but virginity of the heart must belong to everyone. Virginity of the flesh is bodily integrity, virginity of the heart is an unblemished faith."⁵

Since all Christians have by their Baptism contracted the union with Christ that He Himself has sealed with His Spouse the Church, all of them—men and women, married or unmarried—can be called the spouses and virgins of Christ. All of them have the same goal in view: to strengthen the bonds of their alliance, to purify the integrity of their faith, until "at the resurrection they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but will be as angels of God in heaven" (Mt. 22:30).⁶

Thus since all Christians have the same goal, they must look upon the state of marriage and the state of virginity as having one and the same purpose. The spiritual union that the Christian virgin realizes immediately within her heart must also be striven for by the

⁵ On Psalm 147.

⁶ This does not mean that at the resurrection each person will not be a man or woman, just as he or she was born on earth and as they were during their earthly pilgrimage. Each one will keep his own sex. The resurrection would not be a true salvation if it did not save everything human. St. Matthew simply means that in heaven husbands and wives will have only a spiritual friendship that stems from their union upon earth and that will be closer than any other friendship. On this subject, cf. A.-M. Carré, *Companions For Eternity*, Chicago, Fides, 1957.

married woman; but it will be harder for the married woman to attain than for the virgin.

Indeed marriage is the sacrament; that is, the sacred and efficacious sign of Christ's union with His Church, accomplished on Calvary and manifested on Pentecost in the effusion of the Spirit. Husbands and wives represent this union, as St. Paul tells the Ephesians (ch. 5), and yet they accomplish it in their own way. By their union they found, after the example of Christ and His Spouse, a home that strives to be a little Church, a real image of the Church, and they inwardly receive the grace for it.

But marriage, like all signs, is at once a mainstay and an obstacle. Although the wife must obey her husband as she would the Lord, according to the recommendations of St. Peter and St. Paul, and although her husband is supposed to be Christ's representative for her, leading her toward perfect union with Him, he may very well be an obstacle to this union. Although the grace of the sacrament helps her to overcome the snares and distractions of housekeeping, although this grace helps her love for her husband to nourish her love for Christ and to integrate everything into one, the fact remains that the sign of marriage, consoling as it may be to certain souls that are not strong enough to bear the burden of virginity (cf. I Cor. 7:9), remains a sign and as such an intermediary that comes between each of the spouses and the thing signified. The union that the consecrated virgin realizes immediately in her heart is also realized by the married woman, aided and at the same time hindered by the sacrament. The perfect union with Christ, to which the married woman would like to aspire as well as the virgin, can be realized only beyond and through the worries and snares inherent in married life.

Virginity is not a sacrament because it is not a sign, or at least it is not a new sign for the young girl who consecrates herself to Christ. Therein lies the weakness of virginity, namely, that it does not bring with it the gratuitous help that marriage brings. But therein also lies the power of virginity, because it does not present a screen or obstacle that stops the mind at the sign instead of leading it to the thing signified. The virgin contracts *immediately* within her heart the eternal marriage to which the married woman aspires by *means* of marriage. For the married woman, the virgin is an eschatological sign of her aspirations. The virgin represents for her the spiritual state which she is striving to attain in heaven, where

the only thing that counts and remains is interior union with Christ.

However in the measure that the married woman is receptive to the grace of the sacrament and is helped by this grace, she becomes increasingly virginal in her heart. The grace of marriage which unites her sacramentally to Christ is to make her spiritually virginal although she is bound to a human husband, and to make her virginal by means of this very bond and because of it. The sacrament of the spiritual marriage of Christ and the Church "virginizes" the married woman. And that is why, even if Christian marriage is inferior to consecrated virginity, it is none the less far superior to marriage under the Old Dispensation, for the latter did not then have the privilege of being a sacrament or of bringing this grace with it.

To sum up, the married woman and the virgin in the Church are pursuing the same goal. Having been promised to Christ from their Baptism, they are both striving toward a definitive union with Christ. But one attains this union helped and at the same time made less free by the sacrament of marriage; whereas the other attains to it directly and freely, thanks to a love that triumphs immediately over all obstacles. (We might mention in passing that the married woman is less free in terms of the theoretical liberty which the virgin possesses by vocation, but which the married woman has not had the strength to preserve. On the other hand, the sacrament of Matrimony develops the lesser degree of liberty to which the married woman has attested by the very fact that she did get married.)

That is why marriage is not "of counsel" as is virginity, but is "permitted." This signifies that it is good, for what the law permits cannot be forbidden. And in view of this, certain persons, in the light of their temperaments and circumstances, may be advised to get married (I Cor. 7:9). Such is the advice St. Paul gives certain persons who are "burning" to marry (I Cor. 7:9). Thus too, he recommends that certain "younger widows marry, bear children, rule their households" (I Tim. 5:14). But this also means that by comparison with virginity it is a "lesser good."

(c) *The power and the demands of the sacrament*

The union of Christian spouses is the sacramental sign of the union of Christ and the Church. This means that on the one hand the husband must be to his wife the representative of the Lord;

and she in turn must be subject to him "as to the Lord" (Eph. 5:22). The grace of marriage is to unite the wife more deeply to Christ in her heart, by means of her marital union and within the very bonds of her union to her husband. This also means that on the other hand the wife is to her husband the representative of the Church, or better still of Mary who in her whole person is what the Church, considered in her feminine role as the Spouse of Christ, is collectively. The grace of marriage should bring the husband daily to a closer conformity with Christ by means of his union with the woman he has chosen and who is a sign to him of the perfect woman whom God created to be the Mother of Christ and of every Christian. The believing husband cannot be indifferent to the treasure of interior beauty of the one who is united to Christ and who is spiritually virginal in the measure of this union. Thus each spouse is won to Christ by his partner: the woman by the loving guidance of her Christian husband, and he by his Christian wife's holy life and chaste behavior (see I Pet. 3:2).

Marriage has not been changed intrinsically by the fact that it has become a sacrament. It has merely stopped being what the malice of men had made of it, for "it was not so from the beginning" (Mt. 19:8). It has recovered its original integrity and nobility, but there also shines upon it now the reflection of a mysterious union which gives it a strength and vigor that Adam's fall had made unthinkable. Even though this redemption has been effected only by the Cross, it is a source of real happiness for the spouses, indeed of the only happiness possible.

While this redemption does not change marriage essentially, it does reveal what marriage ought to be. Sinful man wonders if monogamy is really required of him "according to nature," if it is required for the good of the child; or if certain forms of association, such as the matriarchate for example or "companionate marriage," are compatible with the respective vocations of man and woman or with human love. The Christian considers only the union of Christ and the Church. The marriage of believers is one—and possesses a unity that not only excludes polygamy but is the quality of two beings profoundly united and constantly in search of their one being—because Christ and the Church are one.

The Church, the Spouse of Christ, is also His body. "This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). Secondly, marriage is indissoluble as long as both spouses are alive, because

the union of Christ and the Church is an "eternal covenant." Our parenthetical "as long as both spouses are alive" stresses that marriage is a sacrament, a visible sign, and that there is no sign unless there is something concrete, like a living body, to signify. The fact remains, however, that the significance of marriage is diminished in the heart of the man or woman who remarries. That is why the Church does not give the nuptial blessing to widows. Finally, there is in marriage a sort of natural intention to be fruitful, just as in the union between Christ and the Church there is what may be called a missionary intention. Christ and the Church are at work everywhere in the world to bring forth new sons to God, even if souls do not always receive the preaching of the Word and of the sacraments of the faith. Thus the intimacy between a husband and wife is normally nourished by their common intention to bring forth and educate children for God.

This power of Christian marriage also constitutes a demand upon it. Christian morality consists in being, or at least in becoming, what we are. We are meant to become in our moral habits and in the unfolding of our moral activities what we are germinally, inwardly, through grace. If the baptized person *is* a man who has renounced Satan once and for all together with his deceiving seductions and has bound himself to Christ forever, he *must* renounce Satan and cleave to Christ the rest of his life. It is a question of truth and fidelity. Likewise, if the husband is the representative of Christ for his wife, he must become an ever more perfect representative of Christ. And if the wife is for her husband the representative of the Woman whom God made so that she might bring forth Christ in souls, she must do it ever more perfectly. If the home is the sacrament of the union of Christ and the Church, it must bear witness to this union by its warmth and by the mutual renunciation of each of the spouses. What has been given once and for all must also be acquired throughout life. And the more the spouses are to each other what they should be, the more abundantly will they receive the grace of their marriage which continues to act within them because of their fidelity.

Thus Christian marriage is more powerful and more demanding than non-sacramental marriage. But it is intrinsically the same. This fact should be kept in mind in the following pages, as we shall attribute all that we have to say to every marriage that is not a matter of mere concubinage. At least whenever we do not specify

that we are dealing with the sacrament *per se*, we shall be speaking of all conjugal unions.

II. The Ends of Marriage

Now that we have considered the Author of marriage, we must consider the end or—as we shall see—the ends of marriage.

If it is true that nature has specific intentions and purposes, not indeed of her own making but the work of the One who impressed them upon her, we can say that in every animal species nature's intention in attracting each sex toward the other is to preserve the species. Contact between the sexes is so necessary to the life of the species that nature favors it as much as she can by instilling in each adult individual a desire for the other sex that is more powerful than the individual realizes. Inasmuch as man belongs to the great animal genus through his body, he is subject to this fundamental law. On the level of nature's intentions, the reason the meeting between man and woman arouses such ardent desires and brings such exalting pleasures is only because nature's purpose is for the species to survive.

True, man is not just an animal. But he cannot change the fact that he is an animal in his very *essence*. And consequently he cannot prevent the *first* end of marriage from being procreation.

Let us make ourselves clear concerning the term "first end." We are using these words to designate the end of the most fundamental thing in man, the end within him of the species. It is in this sense that it comes first and cannot be denied. It is common to human nature and to all animal natures in which reproduction is analogous. We might also call it the natural or specific end, and this might be more exact. But unlike other animals, man is conscious of the intentions of nature or of the species. In him this must be a lucid and not a blind striving, even if it is the most fundamental end and even if his spiritual condition also presents him with another end.

For man, being spirit, cannot be wholly at the service of the species. His partner, being a person, may not be regarded merely as a "useful" good, for the procreation of children. The partner is a useful good, but he or she is also and first of all an absolute good. And marriage could not be a sacrament if its goal were not equally to bring each of the spouses to the perfection of his or her state. We shall call this second end, thanks to which each of the partners

finds his human and total fulfillment in marriage, the "personal end." However we must clarify this term. It does not mean that the specific end is not, for man, also a personal end. Man does not beget like his brothers at lower levels of the animal kingdom who are endowed with instinct but have neither reason nor spirit.

Even if it is nature's will that the species survive, man, who discovers within himself this somewhat cosmic will, knows whence it comes. He is not its unknowing instrument. The greatness and beauty of the procreative act in man stem precisely from the fact that he freely participates in God's desire which is to multiply His friends and to people His heaven. But personal as the specific end may be to man, it is radically common to the entire species of animal natures; whereas man's so-called "personal" end is proper to the rational person.

Now the "personal end" and the specific end are not opposed to one another—and that is why in a sense they do not constitute two distinct ends—but the "personal end" presupposes the specific end, just as the person of man presupposes human nature. The parties to a marriage normally find the perfection of their state and of their persons in the very work of generation and education that they pursue together.

Let no one think, however, that the specific or "natural end" should be considered as applying to marriage as a function of nature, whereas the "personal end" would apply to marriage considered as a sacrament. *Both* of these ends belong equally to sacramental and non-sacramental marriage. But *both* of these ends have all the more influence in the measure that marriage is holier, more powerful, and makes greater demands.

1. THE CHILD

The natural end of marriage is the child. A previously expressed opposition to generation makes any subsequent "marriage" non-existent and invalid. The importance of this end is so fundamental that the Church deems that she can, at the request of the spouses, dissolve a marriage that has been validly contracted but has not yet been consummated.

A. The act of procreation

God has commanded man to "increase and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28). This obligation, which has not been abolished

by sin or dissolved by Christian grace, goes beyond all selfish or egocentric individual aspirations.

It does not, however, signify that man must always beget children. Man, a spiritual being, also has higher ends. A man can, in view of contemplation, decide not to get married. A married man can, by the use of his reason and in the name of reason, place limitations on his acts of generation—limitations that are not opposed to his generosity. Man is master of his acts. Even when he begets, he would not be perfectly a father if he did not do so voluntarily. Married couples who have children “against their will” may have committed no sin of lust. They may even have made an act of trust and a beautiful sacrifice, and yet something is lacking to the perfection of their act.

We can see the grave error of those who profess to see in the flesh only a source of sin and in original sin nothing but a sin of sensuality! The source of all our ills is pride, and the first sin was a rebellion against God and His order, that is, a sin of pride and of disobedience. But it is true that since man has rebelled against his Author, the spirit no longer harmoniously dominates its lusts, and emancipated flesh militates against the spirit. The equilibrium of man's first days is rewon through struggle, with the grace of Christ. In dealing with the procreative act, therefore, we must avoid two possible errors.

First, we must avoid the error of dualistic pessimism. By blessing marriage the Church shows that she has no contempt for this act. The flesh, woman, marriage do not stem from an evil principle as the Manicheans claimed, or as many were led to believe by a certain Jansenistic mentality, which has bequeathed an influence that has at times been very harmful.

Everything that God has made is good. Only sin is evil. The flesh is good; sentiment is good; sensuality, in the sense that it is a quality of nature and must always be attributed to it, is good. In scorning these goods, the supercilious moralist or the overly austere ascete arrive, paradoxically enough, at a shameful sensuality. “He who tries to act like an angel ends by acting like a beast.” We must not deprecate these goods, but on the contrary overcome the anarchical desires that they arouse.

For it is equally true that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. The opposite error would be that of ill-considered optimism. Man cannot grant nature all that it asks under the pretext that it is

"nature." There is a hierarchy among the natural powers of man. Reason must set things in order and govern. And reason's rule will be fruitful and truly "human" if it succeeds in commanding not tyrannically but with respect for that which is governed. For the emotions and the sensual passions would rebel against strong-arm rule, and some day find expression in terrible revolts or other reactions. Sensibility, like sensuality, has its ends, its laws, its ways of desiring. It is reason's duty not to ignore these facts but to understand them so as to put them to good use.

Marriage is normally a source of equilibrium for man, because it brings him legitimate and healthy pleasures. And yet man must know how to welcome the joys marriage offers without narrow-mindedness and without weakness; and he must use his reason in meeting the difficulties that marriage inevitably entails. There is no automatic equilibrium either for men or women in any state of life. Equilibrium always consists of an effort to impose the guidance of reason upon all one's activities. Those whose temperaments are inherently unstable, whose lives are weighted down with the most "bad luck" and unfavorable conditions, can recover the health of their emotional and spiritual life, of their sentimental and sensual, imaginative and artistic life only if they seek above all what is right according to the sane reason that God has given man, and providing of course that they make themselves do it. The "analyses" of psychiatrists, even when they can bring help, are never more than secondary in relation to this fundamental effort. Moreover, only this effort can bring man the joy that is worthy of him.

This general doctrine can easily be applied to the procreative act. The pleasure that nature intentionally attaches to it must neither be scorned nor sought exclusively for its own sake. The body of another can never be an "object" of pleasure, and the pleasure-seeker who changes partners in order to renew the effect of sensual pleasure is condemning himself never to know true joy. Sensual pleasure should be accepted joyfully, but also with the gravity incumbent upon the procreative act. The bond of the flesh is the sign of a spiritual bond that only the fidelity of the spouses can make living and strong.

However under certain circumstances (illness, lack of resources, etc.) reason may require a husband and wife to limit births. They are then faced with a difficult problem that brings into question their chastity, their prudence, their trust in Providence, their fidel-

ity, and their friendship. They must not be afraid to face all these demands of their union, rather than consider only one or another of them. If they think only of avoiding a sin of lust, they may perhaps be sinning unwittingly and sometimes seriously against prudence or against trust in God, or against the love they owe each other—which is not less human for being principally spiritual.

For example, it is a sin against the lofty virtue of prudence, the first of the cardinal virtues (see Vol. IV of this series, pp. 210-250) to beget children against one's will, if one is sick and without work, if one does not have sufficient resources to bring them up and educate them. Recourse to Providence, which is necessary in any case even under the most favorable conditions, is not an alibi that can allow sinners to hide their own sins from themselves. And Providence is not obliged to bring a remedy to acts that reason has forbidden.

But if the shortsightedness of husband and wife—and it may be serious—has not prepared them for this continence, if their friendship is shaky, if bitter words have already been exchanged, if temptation is close upon one of the partners, it may actually be sinful to observe continence when the marital union is in danger. Sincere couples for whom this procedure is efficacious are justified in having relations only at those times when fertility is practically impossible. And what if this measure is not efficacious? Are they then obliged to live as brother and sister?

Legalistic morality, which solves all problems in the form of laws or commands, immediately answers this question with a legal answer that is perfectly suited to it. It is a very simple answer—at least for the one who lays down the law—because legalistic morality is not concerned about anything besides the act in view and the law that applies to it exactly. It considers these precepts as a series of isolated monads having no relations to one another or to the subject upon whom they are imposed.

But the subject may be unable to bear the burden of the law. In such an instance, its only effect is to drive him to sin. As St. Paul says with great truth: "I did not know sin save through the Law" (Rom. 7:7). Thus, without grace, the law can lead to hopeless despair: "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died, and the commandment that was unto life was discovered in my case to be unto death" (Rom. 7:10). The case of the man subject to the law is thus the same as that of a five-year-old child who is

forced to carry a 100 pound bag. Is there any cause for surprise that whenever such a heavy burden is laid on his frail shoulder, the child falls? He must first be given muscles and bones and the interior strength to bear so great a weight.

Similarly, is there any cause for surprise that couples whose theological life is weak, who pray very little, who receive the sacraments only at long intervals, who have no apostolic concern about their neighbor, who are not in the habit of doing penance, are completely abashed and without resources when they are asked: "Do you promise not to do it again?" An effort is asked of them in which passion has the upper hand, without any apparent concern for their theological life, without making any similar demands on their prayer life, their participation in the sacraments, the progress of their life of penance, their generosity and their victorious faith. The egoist is asked to make the heroic act of giving himself, and it is supposed to be easy for him. A man who does not have the habit of abstaining from any pleasure, is called upon to make an act of heroic temperance. Is not the inconsistency obvious? The problem we are considering must be seen in its context within the totality of a Christian life and as a function of its degree of development.

Husband and wife must therefore be set on the path of progress by being encouraged as much as possible to take their *whole* Christian life seriously, and not merely one or another article of the law isolated from the rest. Above all, in this domain there can be no watertight compartments. "Who is there that overcomes the world if not he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (I Jn. 5:5). The entire spiritual organism must be put to work, and not merely one or another virtue.

As long as husband and wife have not reached a certain degree of spiritual development—and who can boast he has reached perfection in it?—they are inevitably faced at certain times with "conflicting duties." On the one hand they must beware of giving too much to "the flesh." On the other, they must preserve the charity demanded for the couple's unity, and therefore exchange marks of tenderness and love that are helpful in sustaining their fidelity. How are these conflicts to be resolved? The law gives only limited and vague guidance in this matter. It offers no efficacious help to a soul without life. If husband and wife take into consideration merely the sin of the flesh, they may avoid this sin. But in so doing, will

they perhaps not sin still more seriously against marital friendship? If they consider only their union, will they not be led to sacrifice something to their fidelity?

Obviously, husbands and wives should not be disheartened by these difficulties. They can trust in the Lord that these problems and conflicts will some day be solved, or at least gradually left behind. But if they are to succeed, they must strive not so much to conform outwardly to one article of the law to the exclusion of the others, as to develop their whole theological and Christian life to the fullest. But they won't succeed in one day. And what are they to do today, while they are still wayfarers? What advice should be given them?

Husband and wife must be shown how to face their own conflict in all prudence and to make their own decisions at each moment, whatever the circumstances. We use the word "prudence" and not "conscience," for conscience is a static state of soul and the solutions it inspires usually spring from a juridical and static mentality. Prudence, on the other hand, is the first of the cardinal virtues and a dynamic quality that is entirely orientated toward the future, toward the act, toward the becoming of things, and inspired and imbued with faith and love. This is the virtue that must guide all our moral activities. See Volume IV of this series, the chapter on "Prudence."

The law's many articles are so many signposts on either side of the road. The priest from whom husband and wife ask advice is there to show them the end of the law at the end of their difficult road, to exhort them not to be discouraged if they do not fully succeed right from the start, and to give them the weapons of prayer, humility, repentance, and sacrifice. But it is up to them to do what is right with increasing exactitude, and to avoid evil. Let them remember each day the good they have done and think of all the good that still remains to be done. They should regret their sins, while avoiding other sins, and learn some lesson from the past so that they may imitate God who makes even evil serve the cause of goodness. Finally, let them keep their trust in God's mercy who has not established marriage to torture them, since His Apostle Paul has declared that on the contrary: "It is better to marry than to burn" (I Cor. 7:90). And let them remember that God will have all the more compassion for their suffering in the measure that they are aware of their weakness but, because they hope in God, are

never discouraged. It is by continuing to trust, by never thinking they have "arrived," but by always wanting to advance, that they will become perfect.

St. Ambrose, who exhorted so vigorously to virginity, once praised a virgin consecrated to the Lord who preferred to be prostituted rather than sacrifice to idols. In his words: "It is better to have a virginal mind than a virginal body. If we are not allowed to be chaste before the eyes of men, let us at least be chaste before God" (*De virg.*, 2:24). Now this does not mean that St. Ambrose said it was good to prostitute oneself. In fact we know that in cases of this sort the Holy Spirit has sometimes inspired martyrdom. But can we say that He always does? St. Ambrose has here given us an example of a difficult conflict of conscience.

B. The child's education

Inasmuch as man is flesh and spirit, he must follow up his birth in the flesh by a sort of spiritual birth, i.e., education. Thus it is because parents are generators that they are also educators. Parents are responsible for the growth and education of their children. They can seek help from others, but never to the point of completely relinquishing their function.

A man's growth is not only a matter of the body. It must also be the development of his sensitive and emotional life, of his intellect and spirit. Education must take these different human levels into account to obtain the most harmonious results. The main thing is certainly the education of the mind—which must govern in man, and above all spiritual formation, the education of the heart, which consists principally in the education of faith. But the flesh, temperament, and sensuality all influence the life of the spirit in their own way, especially in the child. And it is the parents' responsibility to shore up firmly the lower levels of their child's life.

The education of the senses, sexual education, the education of the emotions are elements of a human education. The education of a child is not the training of an animal. It must tend to give him a clear understanding of all his bodily, emotional, and intellectual resources, i.e., of his "human" resources, and teach him to make good use of them in accordance with his reason.

The rules of education are complex, as are the theories that can be thought up about it. The essential is that parents offer their children a united home. God has willed that children be born of

their parents' love. He also wants the parents' love to be the fire around whose warmth each child develops to harmonious maturity. It is interesting to note that the unending tests of modern psychologists lead to similar conclusions. Thus even experience seems to prove that the most perfect education, even if given by someone equipped with degrees, is partially stalemated in a home where the parents do not love one another, and a fortiori don't understand one another, even when they are very "virtuous," very "devout," and love their children very much. The same experience shows that parents who possess no great skill or techniques of education but are united in a deep friendship, ordinarily obtain satisfactory results. The "results" the tests refer to obviously concern the emotional development of the child in harmony with his physical and intellectual development.

When parents love each other, children inevitably benefit from the fire of their love. They in turn have an influence first on their brothers and sisters, and then upon their parents. Present-day experience shows that children of large families are generally less selfish, for example, than those who are the only child in a family. But children exert an influence even upon their parents. When a young husband has his first child he is amazed and may need years to understand what it means to be a father and to bear the responsibility before God of this little being. When a young woman has her first child, does she know what it means to be a mother? Obviously she knows it in her body, but she does not yet know it in her heart. She will learn what it means year after year, when the child grows up, when it needs care, when she has to fight with him against sickness, suffering, evil, or temptation. She will know what it means when her son is no longer a child and becomes a free and adult person, capable in his turn of founding a home. By then, she will have had to renounce little by little many ties, many loving surveillances which are the natural lot of a mother's love.

Fatherhood and motherhood cannot be learned all at once. Only God, who is outside of time, is exempt in all domains from this general law of growth. He does not have to wait for us to grow up to know what it really means to be a Father in His mind and heart. He has everything to give and nothing to receive from us, or at least he never receives anything but His own gifts. But he has devised the parenthood of creatures in the image of His own, and His

providence teaches parents what it means to be fathers and mothers by giving them children and holding them responsible for the growth of these children. Paradoxical as it may be, the child makes a providential contribution in his own way to the maturation of his parents; and the child who loves his father and mother helps to unite them.

Thus love is the beginning and the end of generation and education. The child born of love is naturally loved, and inspires those who have given him life to a greater love. There is a close bond between generation and marital love, nay, between generation and the sanctification of parents. Conversely, how often has the rejected child or, worse still, the child killed in his mother's womb, ruined marital love and destroyed all the resources of a woman's heart? There is such a close relationship between motherhood and the sanctification of woman that St. Paul does not hesitate to say that "women will be saved by childbearing" (I Tim. 2:15).

Thus the sin of abortion is a very special sort of crime against nature, against one of the meanings of the sacrament (see p. 363 above), and against this means of sanctification that God proposes and that sinful woman scorns. It is said that in France the number of abortions equals the number of births. This fact should fill the believers of that land with fear. But even if the child has not been killed, sometimes there still remains a mysterious link between maternal love and marital love. The analyses of certain novelists suggest that a mother may bear resentment against a child she conceived in hate against her will, and who is closely bound up with the memory of a grievous wrong against her personal honor.

2. LOVE PERFECTED

The perfection of love toward which each of the spouses must strive, and that coincides with their own personal fulfillment and absolute perfection, is not contrary to the first end of marriage, which is the child. On the contrary, we have shown that everything is interrelated and that normally it is in the work of generation and education that the love of husband and wife reaches its fullest development. Even sterile couples have sometimes perfected their union by adopting one or more children. We can also consider this love in itself, without reference to the child, and that is what we shall do now.

A. Plighting the troth

The love of a husband and wife is founded on "marital faith," their faith in one another, just as charity is founded on theological faith. In the ancient rituals of marriage, after the priest had proceeded to the exchange of consents, he would ask each of the spouses: "What do you give him (or her)?" And each would answer: "I give him (or her) my faith." Indeed faith is the virtue of beginnings and great risks, a virtue that reason may find legitimate but which it cannot completely control. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us: "By faith he who is called Abraham obeyed by going out into a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going" (Heb. 11:8). Nor do husbands and wives know exactly where they are going. The marriage rite in Anglo-Saxon Churches, whether Catholic or Protestant, has the couple say the following beautiful formula of consent: "I, John, take thee, Mary, to my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part, and thereto I plight thee my troth." "Reasonable" as their union may be, excellent as may be the guarantees furnished by both parties, husband and wife are not in possession of their future. They are taking a risk. But if they have faith in each other, and if, as Christians, they have faith first of all in God, that suffices. God, who does not tell them everything from the start, wills it so.

The troth also consists undividedly in cleaving together, in trust, and in fidelity. It is included in its entirety in the word "betrothal," which has the same etymology. It is a sort of joint will to take risks together. It is a virtue of youth, and one might almost call it the sinew and dynamo of life. For anyone who does not have faith, it seems an absurdity and it makes him smile. But for the one who has it, faith is the happily discovered answer to a mysterious call and the answer to all desires. A man's faith is not contrary to reason and yet the explanation that he can give for it is always insufficient and inadequate. That does not mean that it is merely a blaze of sentiment and that the one who believes is the plaything of his passions. It is a movement of the entire being, and especially of what is best in it, that is, of the spirit. How could a man really have faith in another human being if he did not have faith first of all in that person's intellect and heart? The betrothed must beware of senti-

ment that might deceive his mind, but not to the point of not feeling in his emotions and passions the echoes of this call that rings out in his mind and in his whole being. Rather it is because the mind hears this call in his passions that it sometimes becomes aware of what it was not the first to hear. Thus faith is an interior movement of the whole being even though it is primarily and essentially a movement of the intellect and will.

B. The growth of love

But it is not enough to start out, one must also advance and persevere. An ardent faith at the beginning may end in failure, whereas a "marriage of reason" may develop into a very profound union of minds and hearts. Whatever the point of departure, the love of husbands and wives must grow unceasingly and be strengthened by the past that it gradually accumulates. This is a sweet and tender duty that usually answers nature's deepest desires. But this obligation should never be forgotten, even if nature did not yearn for it. Love that no longer progresses is a dying love.

Since man was made for God, only believers can give the fullest possible measure of their love. Those husbands and wives who cannot recognize the image of God on the interior countenance of one another cannot truly know what love means. But how powerfully Christians can love each other when they are not merely under the power of a passing attraction, even if it is a gift of God, but love each other with all their powers of love: with their emotions first and with all the delicacy this implies, even with their passions, for the flesh is also baptized and promised to resurrection, together with that part of the soul that is made to love the mind and soul of the other, and with that still deeper portion of the soul made only for God. For God is present in each of them. The perfect love of husband and wife is necessarily a theological love, that is to say, it is charity.

If theirs were only a love of the senses, husband and wife would not always be masters of their love but rather its victims. But it is above all a spiritual love that the love of sense can sustain, strengthen, or that a certain emotional repulsion can, alas, thwart, but that cannot reside essentially anywhere but in the mind. It is "a movement of the heart." Yes, but providing we understand it for what it really is: a movement of our deepest being, of our in-

ward life, that is, a movement of our mind and even more of our will. It is a movement of our most profound "self" that makes us will with all our heart the good of the one we love, or rejoice in the good he possesses. Cannot every husband *always* will the good of his wife, even if this often demands that he renounce his own desires?

Since marital love is primarily a spiritual love, a gravitation of one spirit toward another, it implies respect. Before a partner belongs to another, he belongs first of all to God. To God who created him (or her), then recreated him in Baptism and who calls him to perfect friendship with Himself. The paths by which God inwardly calls each of the spouses may differ. This difference must not drive the partners away from each other, since in any event they are now made to go to God through each other. But it must inspire respect, and inspire them both to love more truly and deeply the One whom they still know very imperfectly.

C. Those Responsible for the Home

Marriage is not only a center of love. It is also a society, or rather an association in which each one has a definite role.

In recent years the question has often been raised whether the principle that parental authority is identified with the authority of the father is of natural or ecclesiastical right, or whether it is not the heritage of a society in which the family was long patriarchal. Modern woman no longer accepts that all authority "over the living being born of her flesh should devolve solely on the father. . . . This aspiration coincides with the evolution of an urban and industrial world. The family has passed from the patriarchal stage to that of the immediate family in which the father is absorbed by his work outside the home and leaves the burden of the care of the children upon the mother. . . . Moreover, one of the contradictions of the nineteenth century was the juridical affirmation of an unconditioned paternal authority and the surrender of the children to the mother in actual practice" (J. Folliet, "Revendications féministes et autorité familiale," in *Foyers*, October-December, 1953, p. 303).

In other words, can we say as does one woman: "At a time when the idea of brotherhood in social relations is replacing the idea of fatherhood, the idea of collaboration that of subordination;

at a time when in the best homes families form teams, without worrying about questions of precedence once considered so important, the future course of marital relations has already been clearly mapped out"? (Pauline Le Cormier, "Autorité masculine et psychologie féminine," in *Foyers*, *op. cit.*, p. 300).

Is woman's innate tendency to seek support, a mainstay, an authority, only the monstrous heritage of an outdated civilization and a "secret devil that must be exorcised"? Is not man's frequent tendency to pride simply a tendency of his nature that sin has distorted into a caricature?

The principle of paternal authority seems impossible to establish on the basis of a society in evolution. Moreover, it is certain that through the ages this principle has gone through many variations which must be studied critically. But at least two things are certain: first, it was not woman but man who was created first, and God has not given woman the same function as man. Whatever the evolution of civilization may have been, it is always the young girl and not the young man whose attitudes and appearance are noticeably changed by marriage. It is always the woman who must bring forth children, feed them at the breast, protect and care for them during their earliest years; and God has provided for all this by giving woman, by a sort of natural affinity, a profound understanding of the child's weakness. Thus there exists between husband and wife an irreducible difference that is also brought out by their analogy with Christ and the Church. And that is why St. Paul invites the wife to be subject to her husband as to Christ Himself.

But from another point of view, woman is man's companion and equal. She has the same divine origin, the same spiritual vocation, and the same eternal end. She is a person like him. If man represents Christ, it is only in relation to his wife. Before God, only woman can express the relationship of a spiritual creature, whether man or woman, to his Creator and Savior. God Himself has pointed this out to us by telling us of His betrothal or marriage with the human race. There would be no true equality if only the husband bore the responsibility of his family, and if his wife did not share it. Nor would there be equality if the wife had none of her husband's responsibility nor any influence over him. We must therefore maintain the husband's authority on the one hand, and on the other the shared responsibilities and personal influence of the wife.

If we read Chapters 2 and 3 of Genesis in the light of the many Scriptural texts that speak of Adam and Eve, especially Ephesians 5, Romans 5:14, and many others in the New Testament, we understand that this account is not merely meant to relate a very ancient event nor does it contain only the annals of the beginnings of humanity. It is far more a prophecy announcing God's plan of salvation to us by means of this sign or this mystery: "This is a great mystery—I mean in reference to Christ and to the Church" (Eph. 5:32). To set forth the mystery of the Church, the Fathers have commented upon these first lines of the Bible over and over again.

Just as man leaves his father and mother to be joined to one woman, so Christ left His Father by becoming incarnate, and He left His mother, the Synagogue, to be joined to the Church. Just as Eve was formed from Adam's side during his sleep, so the Church was formed from Christ's side when the blood and water—which are figures of the two sacraments that essentially constitute the Church—poured forth as He slept the sleep of death. After the example of the union of Adam and Eve, marriage is the "mystery" of the union of Christ and the Church, and finds in this union its model, its mainstay, and its ultimate explanation. That is what thirteenth-century painters wanted to show in their own way in this "moralized" Bible.

Mss. Oxford, Bodl. 2708, fol. 6. Reproduction in Paris, Bibl. nat., dep. des Mss., facs. folio 291.

Oxford, Bodl. 270. fol. 7r.

Immisit
ergo dñs
deus fogo
petri i adā
cumq; ob
dormisset: tu
lit una de col
lis eius et re
pleuit carne
pro ea i edifi
cavit coſtam
in mulierem.

omni
ade mo
xpi. quā dñs
dñmur imiſi
ſe: q; pū pla
uit xpm mo
ri pro nob. et
de ſate xpi do
minali in cru
ce edificante
pat eccliam i
ſpontan. ſtu
rent eis de la
ute xpi ſangu
ine qua pū qđ
ſacramēti bap
tiſmi ſignatur
coſtam.



(a) *The husband's authority*

The husband's authority is not based on his merits or his virtue. It comes to him from God, the Creator of all natures, and he has no right to surrender it to another. Moreover, we know that the growth of boys, who by a sort of instinct tend to become identified with their fathers rather than their mothers, is hampered and sometimes ends in serious maladjustments in homes where the woman wields the authority. And in such homes girls acquire only imperfectly the feminine qualities that nature metes out to them at each stage of their development.

The husband's authority is not a mark of excellence, a sign of personal valor, but merely a social function. The persons are equal, but their functions are different. And the husband can exercise his function without harming his wife's personality only if the latter freely accepts his authority and freely submits to it. Forced obedience would be contrary to her dignity and to what God expects of her. The wife's obedience as well as the husband's authority are conceivable only as functions of love, that is, as a mutual gift for the welfare of the home.

Thus there are two possible excesses on the part of the husband: authoritarianism and weakness. And likewise there are two possible excesses in the corresponding feminine attitude: the attitude of the woman who surrenders her family responsibilities and her dignity as a wife in the name of submission, and that of the woman who dominates the home.

Authoritarianism is obviously very natural to man. And thus St. Paul does not need to remind husbands that they must command, but only that they must "love their wives" (Eph. 5:25). This masculine fault is all the more dangerous because the wife sometimes becomes a party to it. She simply passes from her father's guardianship to that of her husband. She delights in being passive, or in flattering her husband's self-love in the secret hope of profiting by it. Husbands should be intelligent and honest enough to unmask these traps which threaten to destroy the truthfulness of their relationship and of their love.

While man is the founder of the home, woman founds it with him. And the responsibility for the success of the home rests equally upon both. The husband must therefore seek his wife's advice in important decisions, and she in turn must make her senti-

ments and ideas known to him, or if need be bring him affectionately to a change of heart. Commands or counsels are acts of reason. Thus, while authority must be affectionate, it must always first of all be "a service of reason" rendered to society. Although the father of a family is the one chiefly responsible for this service, he cannot do it by himself without serious harm. While feminine intuitions sometimes lack organization and clarity, they are none the less a gift that masculine reason does not possess in the same way and that must be utilized for the welfare of each of the spouses and of the home.

Surrender of authority is not so frequent in men, but it is serious because it is contrary to nature. St. Paul warns wives against an attitude that would foster this fault, by telling them to be "subject to their husbands" (Eph. 5:22). "Modern" girls, already accustomed to so much legitimate emancipation, are often ready—so they think—to think only of the equality of love and to be tempted to deny inequality born of a difference in functions. But they often overcome this temptation very quickly after marriage. A woman who has been emancipated and free may complain after a few years of marriage that her husband does not exercise his authority over her, and is unhappy not to be able to look to him as her mainstay. Another is unhappy because she is no longer encouraged to perform her religious duties and must on the contrary bear the responsibility in this matter for the two of them, even though she has a hard time fulfilling her own obligations and is in great need of help. Still another woman, after years of serious infidelity, may honestly admit that if her husband had sternly reprimanded her as soon as he became aware of her illicit relations, and then helped her to give up her erring ways instead of "turning his back" on her under the pretext of respecting her freedom, she might not have come to her present pass.

These examples, which we find elaborated in many modern novels, simply indicate the responsibility incumbent upon the husband and expected of him and of his love. There would be no order in the family if husband and wife, even though equal in rights, had the same authoritative functions, and the wife would be the less free because she would be receiving less help. Hence, setting aside all flattery, she must encourage her husband's rightful authority, discourage his weaknesses, and know how to prudently help him retrieve his authority when he has wrongfully surrendered it.

(b) *The "soul" of the home*

The wife must be subject to her husband in all things, just as the Church is subject to Christ (Eph. 5:24). Does this mean that the mother is without influence over her home and even over her husband? Far from it. Children are naturally subject to their mother's influence, and even the husband cannot help feeling its normally beneficial effect.

The French people, with their Latin and juridical mentality, may tend to consider influence only as an exterior, legal, and institutional force. The thought spontaneously comes to mind that no one has any influence on a community unless he has received the power to command it, to give it laws and regulations, and to guide it from without. There is another approach that is harder but often more efficacious. It consists in making oneself loved or in making others learn to love God by the example of one's own life. Does not love exert a much more powerful attraction than commands, laws, or the sanctions that accompany the law?

Thus a husband can command his wife, but his authority is increased tenfold when, as is normally the case, his wife loves him. And a wife, who has no right to "command" her husband, is not without influence on him when, because of his love for her, she can be said to live in her husband's heart, lighting and quickening his whole life from within. Likewise, while the mother has authority over her children insofar as she shares the father's authority, she also exerts an influence of another sort over them. Trust in their mother makes children obey words, commands, and teaching that they would not accept from someone they did not love in the same way. The father's influence is directive, commanding, whereas the mother's is above all inspirational. She exerts influence from within, and her influence is the more profound in the measure that she inspires a more spiritual love..

Thus while the Blessed Virgin Mary never exercised Peter's authority over the Apostolic College, she certainly had influence over the Twelve and over her Son's Church. St. Luke carefully notes (Acts 1:14) that after the Ascension she remained with the Apostles, persevering in prayer with them in union of spirit. And all of Tradition, especially the most ancient pictures of her, show her to us presiding over the Apostolic Council when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles.

Hence wives are not without influence on their husbands simply because they do not have a prerogative of juridical authority over them. The wife's role is simply different from the husband's. She may not know her power, but it is very real. Indeed, this power has been celebrated in the literature of all civilizations and ages. The authors of the praises of women, as in the *Canticle of Canticles*, spontaneously find consoling comparisons from nature to express woman's power. Her power is a gentle and guiding light, a source of refreshment, music, a flower, a universe of enchantment that reveals man to himself and helps him to reach fulfillment. Woman is also man's muse, his inspiration, his poetic revelation, his echo, the one who restores his self-confidence. Very often, too, she is the one who helps him attain to true spiritual love, the love in which the spirit assumes the sensual powers instead of being conquered and darkened by them.

This mysterious power over man's heart is a very delicate thing. Its charm can easily wither if woman takes undue pride in it and seeks to make use of it to bolster her own rights, or if she seeks to exert this influence, not humbly through her soul and her person, but by putting on a mask of finery and display, by using the least spiritual of her attractions. When she does this, the same literature that celebrated her as a divine message denounces her as a dangerous demon. Hence a woman should not think her dignity has been attacked or brought into question because of the influence or lack of influence she is aware of exerting. Her dignity as a person is always unscathed even when she is obeying, provided she loves. The slave obeys against his will, out of constraint, whereas he who loves is always free, even—and above all—when he decides to give himself and renounce his liberty. In any event, woman is not expected first of all to "be conscious" of her influence, but to preserve the obedience and modesty that are the beauty of her role (cf. I Pet. 3:1-6).

Woman is the "soul" of the home, the one who makes a house human and livable for all. But more than any of her other functions, this one demands great love and modesty of her. A wife who gives herself joyously makes the happiness of a home. She is its interior light and joy. A selfish and vain woman is the source of much sorrow.

III. Consent

Now that we have considered the author and the ends of marriage, we must consider its "form," that wherein it essentially consists. Marriage considered as a sacrament does not have a "minister" in the strict sense of the word, because the bride and bridegroom themselves *are* the sacrament. We might also say that in the act of expressing their union the bride and bridegroom are also its ministers. But according to either view, the nature of the sacrament is such that when we study its "form" we also answer questions concerning its ministers.

Marriage is a union. That is its essence. But it is not just an ordinary union between two persons. It is indissoluble. And this union is so sacred, even when it is not a sacrament, its end is so lofty and so deeply concerns society as a whole that it must be made public and known to everyone. A marriage that is not publicly vouched for does not have the guarantee of society, and persons who have been married without witnesses can easily break up their marriage. Since the Council of Trent, the Church has forbidden "clandestine marriage" with neither priest nor witness. Respectable society looks upon such a union as shameful.

At the start of a marital union, therefore, there must be an official contract, and this contract is realized by the mutual consent of the contracting parties. In sacramental marriage this exchange of consents, by uniting the husband and wife, configures them to Christ and to the Church and constitutes the sacrament proper.

It is not love that constitutes marriage. Love must be the origin of marriage, and the Church strives to make sure of this by the questions she asks of the engaged couple. Love must also inspire husbands and wives who are lawfully married, and as we have said this love must continue to grow. But even if they did not love each other, even if some day they should stop loving each other, once a husband and wife have freely given their consent they are truly married and can no longer be "unmarried." They have freely entered an institution which they did not create, and the bond they have contracted is sacred and indissoluble, granted the nature of marriage instituted by God and the fact that He is always its invisible witness. The faith and love that God has inspired in the heart of the young man—or young woman—may be a call to mar-

riage. But only consent, which is a free act of reason and will, constitutes marriage.

Nor does the child constitute marriage. A man and woman can beget a child without having previously exchanged "consents." True this may result in a debt owed by the natural father to the child and its mother, but neither the debt, nor pity, nor even a sentiment of attachment constitute marriage. For marriage must be mutually agreed to. Conversely, a married couple may not have any children, either through the will of Providence or because they must voluntarily abstain from marital relations, providing their free and common purpose is not opposed to the end of marriage. Such an absence of fertility does not prevent the marriage from having been consented to and therefore being a true marriage. The union of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph was a true marriage. The fact remains, of course, that marriage is not complete until it has been "consummated." The consummation of marriage is, as it were, the seal of consent. In this consummation, what has previously been expressed verbally finds expression in a more human act and one conformable to the end of marriage. The marriage is not thereby made more authentic, but only more manifest.

We must beware of confusing the conditions, the preliminaries, or the ends of marriage with marriage itself. A bridegroom may not have chosen his partner, she may have simply been presented, nay, forced upon him by his parents. And yet provided there has been "consent," a marriage exists. The choice may be made by parents or relatives, as is apparently the custom over much of the earth and as was once a quasi-universal custom. Indeed, for centuries Western "civilization" did not consider marriage a matter of love, and yet when love was sought outside of marriage¹ it was considered as a blow against marriage as constituted by consent. It may happen that a young girl is taken in by her dreams, by her emotions, and by a young man in "love at first sight." Marriage does not for that reason become a dream or essentially a matter of passion. They can well be advised to sit down, like the man who wanted to build a tower and began by calculating the cost, (see Lk. 14:28) and prepare themselves for the act of reason that is consent.

Consent being a contract in justice, its conditions and impediments must be clearly defined. For example, every country has its

¹ Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World* (New York, Pantheon, 1956).

own civil laws that determine the minimum marrying age below which the consent of a young man or a young woman would not be valid. However if the parties are both baptized, the conditions and impediments depend exclusively on the Church: "If anyone says that matrimonial causes do not belong to ecclesiastical judges, let him be anathema" ² (Council of Trent, Session XXIV, Canon 12). The Code of Canon Law likewise declares: "Matrimonial causes between baptized persons belong by right and exclusively to ecclesiastical judges" (Canon 1960).³ The Church obeys civil legislation forbidding church marriages before the civil ceremonies, but she recognizes as valid (at least for baptized persons) only marriages contracted under her laws.

The impediments defined by the Church are of two sorts: Those that render a marriage invalid and therefore null and void; and those that merely render it illicit. In the Latin Church the invalidating, or diriment obstacles are as follows: 1. Age (under ecclesiastical law, males must be sixteen to marry, females fourteen). 2. Impotence. 3. The bond of an already contracted marriage. 4. Difference in religion (when one of the parties is Catholic and the other has not been baptized). 5. Sacred Orders. 6. Solemn vows of religion. 7. Abduction. 8. Adultery and crime. 9. Consanguinity (the impediment is total in the direct line; and to the third degree of kinship in the collateral line). 10. Affinity (between one of the parties and relatives of the other) in the case of remarriage. 11. Public disgrace. 12. Spiritual kinship (godparents and godchildren). 13. Adoption, at least in instances where it is an invalidating obstacle under civil law.

The prohibiting impediments are: 1. Simple and private vows. 2. Adoption, in cases where it is a prohibiting impediment under civil law. 3. Difference in religion (when one of the parties is Catholic and the other has been baptized in another faith). The Church can dispense from some of these impediments if the alleged reason is legitimate. She can also regularize invalid unions when dispensation from the impediment is possible. All these questions are matters of canon law, to which we refer the reader.

To what does consent relate? Certain authors say that it gives "a

² *Si quis dixerit, causas matrimoniales non spectare non iudices ecclesiasticos, A.S.*

³ *Causae matrimoniales inter baptizatos jure proprio et exclusivo ad iudicem ecclesiasticum spectant.*

right over the body of the other." However while this definition is exact, it seems incomplete and awkward as a means of expressing this great mystery. It is certain that marriage does not give "rights" over the thoughts of the other, for the mind is subject only to God. It is also certain that true love is always a gratuitous act and that it is contradictory to demand it from another as a right. But when a couple consent to marry, they are pledging themselves to love one another, and love is something more than the mere union of bodies.

While any spiritual exchange must often be respectfully awaited rather than asked for, or a fortiori demanded, the fact remains that husbands and wives who respect one another in this way thereby attract the gratuitous gifts of spiritual union and mutual confidence. They thus share in common an increasingly vast domain that brings them an ever-growing joy, whereas those who would always "demand" to know the thoughts of the other, the preoccupations of his (or her) mind or heart, would be less and less united. Respect and discretion are the necessary garment of cordial marital love. And consent is a pledge of this love. Since husbands and wives "belong to each other," they have other things to do besides constantly demanding their rights. Above and beyond this, they must love each other.

1. "I WILL"

Consent finds expression in the "I will" of each of the parties, in their signature affixed to their "act" of marriage, and in the exterior forms of the contract that civil and ecclesiastical society have determined. The Church has provided for this in the following way.

If there are no "impediments" to the marriage, or if a dispensation has previously been granted for all the impediments, it is necessary for the celebration of a real marriage that the parties be free and that they exchange their consents before a priest.

The Church does not consider "civil marriage" a true marriage for Christians. It is a necessary juridical formality, but does not constitute the marriage. There is only one marriage possible for baptized persons, and that is sacramental marriage. In the eyes of the Church, any other "marriage" is concubinage. For the non-baptized on the contrary, the exchange of consents before the mayor constitutes marriage, and this marriage is indissoluble by the very fact that it exists. If the partners are later converted and baptized, their marriage will become sacramental *ipso facto*, without need of

any other ceremony in addition to Baptism. For baptized non-Catholics, the "form" of their marriage is that demanded by their "Church." If their Baptism is valid, the Catholic Church also recognizes the validity of their marriage contracted according to the form of their Church. Thus they do not need to regularize their marriage if they are later converted to Catholicism.

But in the case of a mixed marriage, where one party is Catholic and the other Protestant, in the eyes of the Church there can be only one valid marriage: marriage celebrated in the Catholic Church. There are no "half-marriages," where one party is married and the other is not. Since the Catholic party can be validly married only in the Church, his (or her) partner must be married under the same condition.

The question arises, however, whether the Catholic who marries a non-baptized person is sacramentally married. By virtue of the adage, "there are no half-marriages," it appears that there is a contract, but no sacrament, since the non-baptized party is not capable of receiving a sacrament. Such is the common opinion of theologians. This establishes an exception to the general principle according to which the baptized person can contract only a sacramental marriage. But this is only an opinion. There are a few theologians who state, on the contrary, that there is a sacramental marriage only for the baptized partner, thus bringing into question the principle that there are no half-marriages.

Consent must be free. The Church strives to be as certain of this as possible by questioning the engaged couple in advance. The freedom of the promise presupposes that it is conscious and intelligent. The law presumes that an engaged couple have sufficient knowledge of what marriage entails after they reach the ages of sixteen and fourteen. However this presumption does not dispense the parents from giving them due instruction in these things.

Finally consent calls for the obligatory presence of the pastor or his delegate. On the basis of centuries of experience, the Church demanded this presence at the Council of Trent. Therefore no marriage is valid without the presence of the pastor of the parish or his delegate. Ordinarily, he should be the pastor of the bride, but for a good reason marriage can be celebrated before the bridegroom's pastor (Canon, 1095).

If we want to discern within the rite of mutual consent, as we have done in the other sacraments, what constitutes the "matter"

and what constitutes the "form," we would say that the "matter" is constituted by the totality of exterior signs: the wedding procession, prayer side by side, the bestowal of the ring as a public expression of intention. Of course these "signs" can be reduced to a minimum, as happens in marriages regularized *in extremis* at a death bed, for example. The "form" of the sacrament is constituted by the mutual "I will" of the bridal couple, which gives the matter its full meaning.

We see that the nuptial "I will" possesses a rare plenitude. But there are degrees to this plenitude. Beautiful as the mutual "Yes" of any man and woman is, the "Yes" of Christians is still more excellent. For it is likewise a Yes to God's will, a Yes that agrees to conform to the divine examples of Christ and the Church, a Yes that wills to be fused into the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, in whom there was "only 'Yes.' . . . For all the promises of God find their 'Yes' in him" (II Cor. 1:19-20). Feeble as it may be, the "I will" of a Christian bridal couple contains the whole Christian mystery.

2. THE INDISSOLUBLE BOND

Marriage, whether non-sacramental or sacramental, but especially if it is the latter, is indissoluble. But there may exist only an apparent marriage. In that case, when the Church has been requested to make an inquiry she can establish the non-existence of the apparent marriage and declare it void. Such is the case if there has been no mutual consent and this can be proven to be so, if a priest was not present to witness the ceremony, if one of the parties has expressly declared he did not want to have any children, etc. The declaration of nullity is not an annulment. And the Church now greatly limits the possibility of such a declaration by making the bride and bridegroom answer and sign a questionnaire.

However there are exceptions to the indissolubility of marriage. The first is the case of the non-consummated marriage, which can be dissolved by a dispensation of the Holy See or by the solemn profession of one of the parties. We have already pointed out this exception, which merely signifies that a non-consummated marriage is not a perfect marriage. At the same time it cannot be dissolved merely at the wish of the husband and wife, without a dispensation.

The second case is that of the Pauline privilege. It is based on

the authority of St. Paul, who takes care to declare: "I say, not the Lord" (I Cor. 7:12). In St. Paul's words:

If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she consents to live with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he consents to live with her, let her not put away her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but, as it is, they are holy. But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart. For a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace. For how dost thou know, O wife, whether thou wilt save thy husband? Or how dost thou know, O husband, whether thou wilt save thy wife? (I Cor. 7:12-16).

St. Paul thus assumes that of two non-baptized parties to a marriage one is converted and baptized; and he declares "if the one who is not baptized accepts the conversion of the other, let them not separate. But if the unbaptized party does not accept it, the other can separate." St. Paul holds the benefit of the faith to be preferred to the benefit of the marital union in cases where they are in opposition and where cohabitation is no longer possible. The bond is broken when the baptized person remarries. The Church grants the Pauline privilege only after having interrogated the unbelieving party and having tested his (or her) will to no longer "live peacefully" with the baptized party.

This makes clear once more that the bond of non-sacramental marriage is less powerful, less vigorous, than the bond of the sacrament. St. Paul can assume the responsibility of dispensing from this bond in favor of the faith of the converted partner. After him, the Church has recognized the Sovereign Pontiff's power to dispense from the non-sacramental marriage of two unbaptized spouses when one of the parties is converted and becomes subject to the laws of the Church. However, serious motives analogous to the one St. Paul presents, must be present. This dispensation is rarely granted.

Outside these cases, the union of husband and wife is indissoluble, especially that of Christians, which lives on not as a sacrament (inasmuch as the sacrament consists in the ritual exchange of consents) but as a permanent sacramental reality (*res et sacramentum*). The daily fidelity of husband and wife that has been signified by the sacrament is itself the permanent sign of the union between Christ and the Church, and it continually draws down upon husband and wife the grace of the Christian mystery.

IV. The Grace of Marriage

The word "grace" can be understood in two ways. On the one hand it signifies beauty, elegance, the quality of something that is graceful and gratuitous. On the other hand, it can designate a favor from God. We can distinguish these two meanings, but we do not always have to dissociate them. It is through grace, understood as a favor or gift of God, that marriage regains its beauty and honor. This does not mean that marriage is not fundamentally an institution of nature. It merely means that in the present condition of humanity, the spiritual beauty and success of marriage are the effect of God's healing grace. Marital love would not be beautiful unless it were first of all and principally a spiritual love. If it were only a selfish love devoid of charity, it would be neither beautiful nor honorable. When we consider the beauty of marriage in those whom God slowly heals of the effects of original sin, we consider by the same token the grace proper to marriage, the grace God grants to husbands and wives, as we would consider a cause through its effect.

In its formula for the nuptial blessing, the liturgy of the Latin Church suggests ways of envisaging this grace. When the priest blesses the young bride during the Mass, he says:

True and chaste, may she wed in Christ; and may she ever follow the pattern of holy women:

And may she be dear to her husband like Rachel;

Wise like Rebecca;

Long-lived and faithful like Sara.

Although this blessing is addressed to the bride and not to the bridegroom, it relates to the union of both spouses. The nuptial liturgy habitually places greater emphasis on the bride. It is in her parish that the Mass is celebrated. It is she who is adorned in a beautiful white gown and veil. While the husband whom Scripture praises "is honorable in the gates, when he sitteth among the senators of the land" (Prov. 31:23), the wife remains at home. The home is the wife's only vocation. Whether a virgin or a married woman, this is the choice that decides the whole course of a woman's life and in particular of her profession, which she often gives up when she gets married. Once married, her very being is transformed. She is no longer a young girl but a woman. She is ready to suffer in her own body all the hardships implicit in preg-

nancies, childbirths, and the education of children. She must learn to be the reasoning power for her little ones who have not yet attained the use of reason. She must think for them, watch over them at every moment. She is, so to speak, the soul of the growth of each one, and at the same time the life-giver of the entire home. For this reason she has a right to prayers that concern not only her but the spiritual success of the entire family and consequently the spiritual needs of her husband. Just as the Church, Christ's Spouse, is also the home, or the family of God, so the wife is the figure and the best expression of the home as a whole. It is in her capacity as homemaker that the priest addresses her, without however belittling the corresponding share of grace and spiritual qualities that he also asks of God for the husband.

This privilege granted to the wife has another meaning. It points to the Church's dignity, which delivered woman from the humiliating condition into which ancient religions and civilizations had held her.

1. LOVABLE LIKE RACHEL

Rachel, according to the sacred writer, "was well favored, and of a beautiful countenance" (Gen. 29:17). Jacob found her so lovable that he was willing to serve seven years with his future father-in-law, Laban, to win his daughter's hand. And those seven years "seemed but a few days, because of the greatness of his love" (Gen. 29:20).

Rachel is a symbol. A wife owes it to herself to make her husband love her not only by her natural grace and her knack for making herself attractive, but also by her intelligent management of the home, her diligence, her discretion, and above all her goodness. As St. Peter says, her husband may well be saved thanks to her, not by her words but by her behavior, simply by the example of her chaste and reverent life (I Pet. 3:2). In like manner, the husband must prove himself worthy of his wife's love.

Obviously the primary intent of each of the spouses must be to love rather than be loved. But marital love is friendship. He who loves also needs to be loved. How can a husband or wife who loves his partner fail to hope that their love is mutual, and how could he (or she) fail to try to be lovable lest his love not be returned? And from another point of view, does not everyone feel a quickening of life when he knows he is loved? How could any of us love God

deeply without faith in His Love and without knowing that God has loved us first (see I Jn. 4:10)? When a person is loved it is a sign that he has also found his joy in this love. Being loved nurtures greatness of soul and increases a hundredfold one's love for the lover.

But none of us has much power to attract the love of another with certainty, except for the fact that love for another has in itself a power of attracting the love of the beloved. Nothing is more pleasant than to be loved by the one we love. Indeed, even in their eagerness to be loved, husbands and wives must first of all think of loving.

Moralists often speak of the "rights" or "duties" of married couples, or of the "laws" of marriage. This manner of speaking may express a portion of the truth, but not the whole truth. Our Lord Himself, who does not want to treat us as slaves but as friends, has left an example of friendship to married couples which is something very different from a code. The term "justice" and words related to it have an unpleasant ring when applied to marriage. Actually there does not exist between a husband and wife the perfect *otherness* demanded for perfect justice as well as for perfect equality between subjects under law.

Husbands and wives are not altogether *apart* from one another since they belong to one another. The fact that they belong to each other creates a certain identity of being between them that is prejudicial to justice. No one is just with regard to himself. No one calls himself to account. Thus it does not befit the love of husbands and wives, or the sort of common being they possess between themselves, that they call each other to account with regard to their mutual good will. Love is always inventive and new, and gives little thought to imitating what it has already done in similar circumstances in order to be "just." Love is what it is from one day to the next. It wants above all to "be." Thus, the "law" of marriage is principally to love. Moreover, "justice" is no longer possible where love is no longer possible.

Since love is their principal intention, husbands and wives must use all the means at their disposal for loving each other. They will of course exchange marks of tenderness and affection, without which there is no genuine love, especially in marriage. But they will never forget that the friendship they must build together has a spiritual foundation. External marks of affection may in part be

lacking without hampering the progress of their love and of their striving toward oneness.

Apprenticeship in "being one" is always painful to the "ego," and demands much effort and mutual help. Husbands and wives must therefore do all in their power to nurture this consciousness of unity. The wife will speak of her children as often as possible as "our children" and not "my children." She will take an interest in her husband's affairs and will not look upon him simply as the provider of money for "her" home. The husband for his part may be happy to take advantage of his wife's advice on some matter, which she can give only if she shares her husband's personal worries as far as she is able from day to day. Likewise, the husband will not look upon housework solely as his wife's concern. He will try to understand her tasks, to share in them helpfully. They will enjoy praying together, going to Mass and receiving Communion together, sharing the fruits of their spiritual reading. If their fervor is great, they will from time to time accept the duty of "taking stock."

Need they go further? It seems wise from the very start for husbands and wives not to hide from each other the letters they receive from their respective relatives and friends. Then they won't be tempted to do it later and will avoid one of Satan's most dangerous traps. Finally, experience seems to counsel married couples not to live with their parents, especially during the first years of marriage. Providence wills that under normal circumstances a man should leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife and that they be one flesh. It often happens that when a young couple start their married life in the home of the wife's parents, for example, they cannot attain autonomy and self-determination. And what is more serious, this may lead the young wife to give her father and her own family the best part of her love. The founding of a home demands a break and a separation. Only those who are capable of breaking away are capable of giving themselves.

On the other hand, married couples should beware of "sealing off" their home, under the pretext of achieving privacy and unity. Obviously long visits by relatives or friends are not always prudent or desirable. Marriages have been wrecked because of imprudent generosity in inviting some brazen young woman or philandering man for a prolonged visit. Conversely, couples may strive to protect their privacy with a selfishness that may prove fatal. The wife jealously kept at home by her husband will be tempted to hide her

letters and contacts, even those that are perfectly respectable. The husband who is jealously watched by his wife may one day succumb to temptations that will be all the more violent because they will give him a sense of liberation and he will not have his wife's help to overcome them.

The question is asked: Should the family be "open" or "closed"? Charity asks no such questions because it does not choose, or at least it chooses what is right. It would be contrary to charity for the family to be "open," even for apostolic reasons, if this were to result in keeping husband and wife apart and denying them any real privacy. It would be equally contrary to charity for a Christian home to ignore its needy neighbors, its friends, and all those whom it can and should help.

Marriage is a difficult undertaking that does not succeed in a single day. Husband and wife grope from one good deed to be done to another that they have not yet thought of doing, until they finally discover the oneness born of their perfect, trusting, and reciprocal friendship, a friendship that is free and yet steadfast, gratuitous and yet as necessary to each as his own heart.

2. WISE LIKE REBECCA

Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, had two sons: Esau and Jacob. When Isaac became an old man, Rebecca saw to it—by means we all know—that the father's blessing should go to Jacob, the younger son, who had bought the right of seniority from Esau. This kindled in Esau a hatred for his brother and a desire to kill him. Rebecca asked: "Why shall I be deprived of both my sons in one day?" (Gen. 27:45), and she persuaded Isaac to send his son Jacob away (Gen. 28:2), while she herself said to him: "Flee to Laban my brother in Haran" (Gen. 27:43).

Rebecca thus became the symbol of wisdom. This sort of wisdom may not have been free from sin (although Scripture does not speak of it). When St. Augustine tells us that the substitution of Jacob for Esau is *a mystery*, i.e., the prophetic sign of the Incarnation (Christ is clothed in human nature just as Jacob was clothed to appear like Esau), he does not deny that it was a lie, materially speaking. Whether a lie or not, the nuptial liturgy has kept in mind not Rebecca's duplicity, but her wisdom.

Wisdom is a gift of the intellect that is particularly necessary to parents. Familial wisdom, which the ancients also called "economic

prudence,"¹ is the virtue of heads of families who are rich in experience and in ingenuity, who can understand situations as they arise and foresee all contingencies, and who can command with affection and gentleness. Thus the Epistle for the feast of a holy woman praises her less for her charm and beauty than for her wisdom:

Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain:

The woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised (Prov. 31:30).

The wise use of an upright and healthy intellect in running a home is one of the most beautiful tasks of love. It demonstrates once more that husbands and wives must love each other not only with their emotions and passions, but also by giving each other the best they have to offer, namely, their intellects. It is by applying their whole minds to what they have to do that they will wisely direct their love and their home.

This means that none of their spiritual resources should be neglected. The wife should not neglect to read whenever she has the opportunity, she should retain an interest in being well informed, in learning new things. She should know how to pause in her activities not only to pray to God but also to think of Him, to think of her home in His presence, so that her home may be built inwardly within her own heart before, with God's help, it becomes an external reality.

To love wisely is to love a person for what he is; not to selfishly try to divert him from his own task, but on the contrary to encourage him in what he is doing and to second his good desires. To love one's children wisely is first of all to win their trust, to understand them, to see things through their eyes, the eyes of their time, of the new generation. It means to educate them from day to day, to foresee their crises—the crises of adolescence, temperament, love, faith—and to help them overcome each crisis as it arises.

This task seems particularly urgent and difficult at the present time, when a sort of division seems to be arising between generations: "The generation of the parents and the generation of the children live in a state of reciprocal independence when they are not openly at war. . . . It is a serious problem. Everything is done as if the family were no longer attuned to the world, but fed on

¹ From the Greek word *οικονομικός*, that relates to the administration and ordering of a household.

outdated notions of a future that has become a thing of the past.”²

Finally to love one's children wisely, especially in the case of Christian parents, is generously and fully to assume the task of religious education entrusted to parents by the Church. Far too many parents turn over this education to the school, to catechism classes, or to the parish, whereas it is primarily their task. True, there is a sharing of responsibilities as between the Church and Christian homes. The home is not self-sufficient. In the last analysis, it cannot do without priests. But in a general way the Church entrusts to parents the religious education of their own children. The respective roles of the priest (and especially the bishop) on the one hand and of the home on the other can be compared to the duties of fatherhood and motherhood. The wisdom of parents consists in their rightly understanding this relationship and in not neglecting their own task, which is one indispensable to the pastor.

3. LONG-LIVED AND FAITHFUL LIKE SARA

Sara lived 127 years (Gen. 23:1), and remained faithful to her husband throughout her life although she was long childless and conceived Isaac only “when she was past the time of life” (Heb. 11:11). St. Peter offers her as an example to married women, with the words:

Let not theirs be the outward adornment of braiding the hair, or of wearing gold, or of putting on robes; but let it be the inner life of the heart, in the imperishableness of a quiet and gentle spirit, which is of great price in the sight of God. For after this manner in old times the holy women also who hoped in God adorned themselves, while being subject to their husbands. So Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. You are daughters of hers when you do what is right and fear no disturbance (I Pet. 3:3-6).

St. Peter adds, addressing husbands: “Husbands, in like manner dwell with your wives considerably, paying honor to the woman as to the weaker vessel, and as co-heir of the grace of life” (I Pet. 3:7).

Fidelity in marriage, because it presupposes the harmonious mastery of the mind over the senses, is inseparably bound up with chastity. Hence the nuptial blessing addressed to the wife shortly before the mention of Sara says: “True and chaste, may she wed in Christ.”

² G. Venaissin, “Drame de l'autorité familiale,” in *Foyers*, October-December, 1953, pp. 371-372.

Chastity, being the virtue that assures mastery of the spirit over the flesh, belongs to every state of life. However the acts that are proper to this one virtue differ, depending on whether one has vowed one's life to the Lord, one is preparing for marriage, or is already married. Chastity allows husbands and wives to exchange certain marks of tenderness and even inclines them to such exchanges when it is right, but it does not allow engaged couples to do these things. And as for those who choose to remain celibate for the Lord, chastity forbids any embrace or contact, and even any sentiment that would in itself be a secret inducement to conjugal intimacy.

The thing that makes conjugal chastity more difficult is the fact that it is not exclusive like that of virgins. Conjugal chastity allows acts that virginity forbids, and may even inspire and direct such acts. Situated between these two forms of chastity is the chastity of engaged couples, founded on respect, discretion, and delicacy. It is good for fiancés to exchange words of love, whereas such words would be lies and "flirtation" between young people who have no intention of marrying. But mutual respect and courageous prudence must keep them from any intimacy that might induce them to acts that are not yet permitted. However the chastity of the engaged is temporary. Mere abstention from physical acts that are not permitted is not enough to make an engaged couple chaste.

And even if a couple has been chaste before, they must remain chaste after their marriage also. And if they have not been chaste, they must become chaste after marriage. This wise and gentle mastery of the acts of their condition presupposes that they are capable of abstaining from them if, for example, the death of one of them obliges the other to continence, or if sickness, ill fortune or forced separation (as in the case of war prisoners) demands rare self-mastery on the part of each.

The assault of the emotional and sensual powers is all the more terrible and the problem of continence all the more difficult to solve because husbands and wives are never really prepared to meet them. They are like the foolish virgins who have not made provision for the future and have no more oil when the bridegroom arrives. Wisdom therefore calls upon husbands and wives to prepare for this peaceable mastery of the flesh, in which the virtue of chastity resides, as early as their first year of marriage, by learning to prudently dominate their desires and giving first place to spiritual

means. It is by loving each other with all their hearts, that is, first and above all spiritually, that married couples will become chaste.

The liturgy of the Church does not forget these spiritual means. After the last wish for a long life and fruitfulness that precedes the final benediction, the priest is asked "to exhort the bridal couple to continence." Since the flesh always clamors for more than it receives, it is good for married couples to impose a compensatory and educational discipline on their passion from time to time. It is good that they do this habitually insofar as possible, without putting it off too long. The rhythm of the liturgical year, in which periods of mortification, fast, and abstinence alternate with the seasons of festivity and joy, is an invitation to married couples to practice a certain asceticism during the time when the Church prepares to celebrate the mysteries of the great feasts. The observance of sobriety on vigils disposes the soul to the spiritual joys of the morrow. The same is true of continence.

Asceticism and discipline of the passions are means among others. They would be of little use unless they were accompanied by common prayer, regular reception of the sacraments, and all the spiritual works which married couples can perform. The prayer of the young Tobias is an example that the Church never tires of offering to married couples. After having obtained Sara's hand from her father Raguel, Tobias was brought to his young wife in a room of the house. And this is what he said to her:

Sara, arise, and let us pray to God today, and tomorrow, and the next day: because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock. For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God.

So they both arose, and prayed earnestly both together that health might be given them. And Tobias said: Lord God of our fathers, may the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains, and the rivers, and all thy creatures that are in them, bless thee. Thou madest Adam of the slime of the earth, and gavest him Eve for a helper. And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever (Tob. 8:4-9).

This noble story recorded in the sacred books makes us realize that the conjugal act can be a beautiful and sanctifying thing in itself. When a husband and wife honor each other as children of God and come together to give God "children who will bless His Name," their act of conjugal love is also an act of theological love,

that is, charity. And this act merits eternal life for each one of them. It is a human act that the grace of God has transfigured.

If on the other hand a married couple are primarily in search of pleasure, if their passion is so strong that they would prefer to be deprived of God than of their pleasure; if the lust of each one is so powerful that it does not seek the friendship of the partner but only the contact of his body, to the point, for example, that the husband would turn to any woman as well as his own wife, the act resulting from such desires can only be a grave sin. Inasmuch as it sacrifices God Himself to the lust of the flesh, it is of its very nature a mortal sin, without taking possible excuses into account.

Between the two extremes, the conjugal act may, while being good and meritorious from one point of view, also involve some venial sin. Such is the case, for example, of husbands and wives who remain faithful to each other and to God, and accept His will, but who are too avid for the pleasures of the flesh. They give anxious attention to the flesh to the detriment of their spiritual friendship, instead of fostering this friendship. This lack of moderation is a minor sin that should be treated with special leniency in view of the nature of the conjugal act. It must not be looked upon with such severity that it blinds one to what is good and holy in the act. It is merely a proof that as long as we are not perfect—and who claims to be?—none of our acts can be perfect in every respect. The prayer, sacrifices, labors, and spiritual generosity of husband and wife will make up for these weaknesses and draw down God's mercy.

Above all else, the love of charity between a husband and wife has the value of an end and also of a means. As we have already seen, the Christian wife finds in the sacrament of Matrimony a means of strengthening her union with Christ. Her love for her husband, being the sacrament of the love she must have for Christ, usually helps her to strengthen her ties with her Savior. That is to say that ordinarily it also makes her spiritually virginal.

4. HAPPY MARRIAGES AND MARRIED SAINTS

The grace of the sacrament does not mean that Christian marriages are always happy marriages, nor even that the marriages of well-matched persons infallibly have happy endings. On the contrary, how many failures strew the path! There is Claudel's Dona Prouheze, who, despite her faith, her prayers, and her sacrifices,

her trust in the Blessed Virgin, and even her heroism, can think only of a certain Don Rodriguez and cannot find happiness with her husband Don Pelagio. Then there is the lazy husband who cannot make a living, who reduces his family to poverty and his wife to serious temptations. Then there is the spendthrift wife who daily squanders more than her husband can earn. Again there is the brutal husband who humiliates his wife. And there is the wife who has remained so attached to her father and her family that she has never learned to give herself to "her" children, or at least to her husband. Then, too, there is the husband who treats his wife like a servant; or the wife who makes everyone toe the line, including her husband. There is the husband who hides his business dealings from his wife, mortgages his own house, and then suddenly reveals the harsh truth. And there is the young wife who has entered marriage unprepared, without any instruction concerning marriage, and who makes her husband miserable by her coldness or by the disgust she finally shows for the conjugal act. There is the childless family, or the family that has suffered several deaths. There is the father who is in a sanatorium, or the mother who is sick. The list could go on indefinitely.

Those women who have found the one they love and spend unending days of happiness with him, are rare. Happy and holy marriages seem to be successes from another world, from a paradise lost to sinners. We even discover at times that the best marital successes are snares for holiness, and that many happy couples experience temptations of self-sufficiency, egocentricity, and selfishness to which they often succumb.

Happy marriages are rare. "Successful" marriages are dangerous and often temporary. However there is one thing that should console every Christian. It is the fact that, in the words of St. Paul, "for those who love God all things work together unto good" (Rom. 8:28). Even defeats are sanctifying. The lives of married saints are not ordinarily very consoling for married couples, because "success" in such marriages seems to be so rare. And yet they are saints.

In following the spiritual direction of St. Francis de Sales, St. Jane Frances de Chantal had to renounce her own home and walk over the body of her own son who tried to hold her back. St. Jane de Valois, having been married to Louis of Orleans against her will, found only misery and suffering in marriage. It is true, of

course, that the Holy See declared her marriage null. These are only a few examples of the experiences of saints with marriage. However let us not be disturbed by these sanctifying "failures." It was more usual for women saints to find a reciprocity of love and holiness in marriage that did not need to be publicized precisely because it was the more usual case. The Church does not canonize everyone who is in heaven. As for husband-saints, history has above all recorded their works of extra-conjugal charity, as in the case of St. Louis of France and St. Stanislaus. This is not to say, however, that they did not receive from their wives the help and love that are the mark of happy marriages.

Christians, therefore, have a right to hope that Providence will give them happy homes. In any event, they would be wrong to be too quickly consoled by the fact that failures can be sanctifying. Some failures are not. And even if failures can be sanctifying, married couples have no right to seek their sanctification in this way. The fact that God often elicits good from evil does not remove the responsibility of those who have done wrong, providing they are really responsible for it. Even if a man's sanctification happens to begin when he realizes that his wife is growing cool toward him, the misfortune that sanctifies him is none the less his wife's serious responsibility. And if he happens to be the cause of his wife's loss of affection, he also bears responsibility for the sin whose consequences are spiritually beneficial to him.

No one has the right to will evil; on the contrary everyone must will only what is good. By seeking exclusively to crucify their evil lusts and trusting to Providence with regard to the joys which it offers them as well as the crosses they must accept, Christian husbands and wives must always seek to be, in every circumstance, a powerhouse of mutual love. There are happy marriages only when husbands and wives love each other. And it is always possible to love. Even suffering, when it is borne together, can strengthen union and nurture the deepest and truest happiness of the married partners.

V. The Rites of Marriage

The rites of the nuptial liturgy not only dispose the bridal couple to receive the sacrament worthily and to make good use of it, but also express the thought of the Church symbolically and ritually.

It is this last-named aspect of the sacrament that we shall study now.

1. THE ENGAGEMENT

Engagements were formerly more important than they are today because they had a different meaning than they do now. The betrothal was the decisive act by which the family of the bride-to-be gave away its daughter to the husband-to-be, and by which the latter pledged himself to her. While the ceremony varied in different Churches, it always involved a definitive promise. This is evident, for example, in a declaration by Pope Severinus to the Bishop of Tarragona that the bond established by such a ceremony was infrangible. The only difference between the betrothal and the subsequent marriage was that the young "fiancée" who had been promised in marriage remained for a while longer in her family. The day of "marriage" inaugurated the bride's life with her husband. In a sense, it was a marriage that involved two ceremonies, sometimes separated by a long interval of days or weeks. The Church gradually attributed a secondary role to the betrothal and eliminated its distinctive character. In the Slavic-Byzantine rite, the liturgy has joined the two ceremonies so that they are now celebrated on the same day and make up the present-day liturgy of marriage.¹ This calls to mind the current practice of including in the single ceremony for the Baptism of adults various other ceremonies that were formerly spread out over a period of weeks.

In the Latin Church, certain rituals still contain beautiful engagement ceremonies. They consecrate the mutual promise of the engaged couple without making it final, and they bless it. There is a blessing of rings and also sometimes of a statue of the Blessed Virgin, later to become "the Virgin of the Home," that watches over the love of the engaged couple. In Périgueux, the ceremony is concluded by an invitation to kiss, which was considered a sanction of marriage according to ancient Roman and Frankish custom.² However in the eyes of the Church there is no canonical engagement (involving the obligation to make reparation in case of a rupture), unless there has been a written promise countersigned by the pastor or at least by two witnesses (Can. 1017, 1). Even the most

¹ Cf. Marchese, "Le sacrement de mariage dans le rite byzanto-slave," in *Paroisse et liturgie*, 1953, No. 3, pp. 184-186.

² P. Doncoeur, *Le rituel du mariage*, Paris, Ed. de l'Orante.

beautiful engagement ceremonies do not constitute a canonical betrothal.

2. THE BANNS

The foundation of a home is of interest to the entire Church. A statistical comparison of the souls the Church wins through conversion from paganism, schism, or heresy, and those she acquires through Christian homes would show that the proportion of the latter is far greater. Thus Christian parents are in great part responsible for the continuity of the Church. That is why the Church, mindful of her own needs and future, takes every precaution to assure the respectability of new marriages. Formerly banns were published from the pulpit at Sunday Masses in the parishes of the engaged couple. The more common practice in cities at the present time is simply to post an announcement of prospective marriages. This is unfortunate. But it is even more unfortunate that there is a tendency, especially among certain wealthy families, to ask for a dispensation from the banns.

3. THE ANNOUNCEMENT

The announcement is not a liturgical act, but it can serve the purpose of making known to many persons the facts that the banns publish less effectively, especially when they are merely posted. If the announcement is well worded, it is an honor to the family that makes it.

It should not be said that the marriage will be "given" to the bride and bridegroom, or "celebrated" by Father So-and-so. The priest is not the minister of marriage. It can simply be said that the marriage will be celebrated in "the Church of . . ." And mention may be made of the priest-friend who will be the witness: "Father So-and-so will receive the consents of the bride and bridegroom in the name of Father X, the pastor of the parish." If another priest celebrates the Mass, one can add: "The nuptial Mass will be celebrated and the nuptial blessing given by Father Y." It should not be necessary to add "Communion Mass," since that is what every Mass should be.

4. CLASS DISTINCTIONS IN MARRIAGE

The principle of class distinctions in marriage is legitimate and stems from the origins of the Church, but for many present-day

Catholics it has lost its significance. This is what St. James has to say about it:

My brethren, do not join faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with partiality towards persons. For if a man in fine apparel, having a gold ring, enters your assembly, and a poor man in mean attire enters also, and you pay attention to him who is clothed in fine apparel and say, "Sit thou here in this good place"; but you say to the poor man, "Stand thou there," or "Sit by my footstool"; are you not making distinctions among yourselves, and do you not become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren! Has not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which God has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man (Jas. 2:1-6).

If class distinctions in marriage are based only on wealth, they set up distinctions among Christians that are certainly not Christian. The Church does not condemn social differences based on a role or function exercised, and it is quite natural that she should honor the marriage of a king with greater pageantry than she would that of a simple citizen. In doing this she is merely honoring authority, "for there exists no authority except from God, and those who exist have been appointed by God" (Rom. 13:1). But the Church cannot honor money in itself without perjuring her Founder.

It is the obligation of the whole Christian community, both priests and faithful, to see to it that even the poor are married with the decorum proper to this great and joyful sacrament, and to prevent the wealthy from holding worldly ceremonies in the Church. Where simplicity is lost there can be no true Christian rejoicing.³

5. THE VEIL AND THE CROWN

The veil and the crown are ritual elements used in both the East and the West. They are among the most ancient and traditional adornments of the marriage ceremony.

In the West since the third century the expression "to receive the veil" when applied to a young girl meant that she was getting married. It was a red veil, the color of flame and quite transparent

³ The bridesmaids are not provided for in the liturgy. However it is such a natural custom that all the religions of the world have adopted it in one form or another. Moreover, it can claim to be inspired by the parable of the ten virgins who surround the bride-to-be and await the bridegroom. Since they, as well as the young men who accompany them, are usually chosen from the bridal couple's respective families, they are the sign of the friendship that henceforth unites the two households. They express the spirit of the families by the note of purity and light they bring to the ceremony.

like a "cloud" (*nubes*), which the bride placed on her head as a sign of the marriage contract. Thus according to "Festus the grammarian, *nubere* (to take the *nubes*) came to signify getting married, and *nuptiae* came to designate marriage."⁴

We shall not discuss the origins of this rite here. Whether or not the Church "baptized" an ancient Roman ceremonial or rather transformed it, it is certain that it has become completely Christian and that the symbolism of the veil has acquired a wealth of meaning. According to St. Ambrose, the veil "is received by the bride as a sign of modesty and purity (*verecundia*)."⁵ The rite of the veil was to be transferred even to the ceremonies of virginal consecration in which a young girl is solemnly "betrothed" to Christ, and was to become a symbol of woman's vocation. Woman wears a veil after her Baptism, for her First Communion, for her wedding, for her entrance into religion, and for her widowhood.

The use of this symbol seems to be authorized by St. Paul (I Cor. 11:3-15).⁶ Woman's mission is more "hidden" than man's. The frailty and distress to which a mother's love caters are hidden and cannot bear to be "unveiled" or set forth in a public place. If a wife is to freely exercise her generosity and mercy, she must be free not to appear in public. That is the significance of her taking the veil on her wedding day.

However the imposition of the veil is a typically African⁷ and Latin tradition. In the East the bride wears a crown, and the wedding is called a "crowning." There have been several sorts of crowns, each with its own meaning: "The metal crown was the classical adornment of the gods; the laurel wreath signified victory; the orange blossom wreath was used to adorn the head of the bride-to-be."⁸ And yet St. John Chrysostom says: "the crown is placed on bridal couples as a sign of victory. They have not been

⁴ R. d'Izarny, "Mariage et consécration virginal au IV^e siècle," in *Suppl. de la Vie Spirituelle*, p. 99. We are drawing from this study here.

⁵ R. d'Izarny, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁶ Concerning the mystery of the veil and its magnificent implications, see Gertrude Von Le Fort, *Eternal Woman* (Bruce, 1955).

⁷ The expression "to take the miter" is synonymous in Africa (the Roman province) with "taking the veil." The "miter" was "a sort of cloth headband of red wool" that women placed around their heads to keep their hair in place (see d'Izarny, *op. cit.*, p. 113).

⁸ F. Marchese, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-186.

conquered by passion before marriage, and they advance invincible toward the nuptial thalamus.”⁹

As a sign of this victory the choir sings hymns to honor the Virgin who brought forth Emmanuel and “in honor of the holy martyrs who were crowned after having victoriously suffered.”¹⁰ In Russia, the crown finally took on “the form of a tiara with a little cupola surmounted by a cross, and with a picture of our Blessed Lady surrounded by angels” (*ibid.*).

6. THE INSTRUCTION AND THE EXCHANGE OF CONSENTS

The exchange of consents constitutes the “form” of the sacrament of matrimony. In the current Latin liturgy it is the pastor or his delegated priest who asks the question to which both bride and bridegroom answer “I will.” The priest does not act as a minister but as a qualified witness.

The exchange of consents is ordinarily preceded by a final warning to all present at the wedding that they must declare any impediment that they know. Then the priest gives the bridal couple an “instruction.” The monition is part of every sacramental rite. Its purpose is to explain the sacrament, to set forth its profound meaning, and to dispose the recipients to receive it worthily. The priest is not an automatic distributor, and the bread he gives must be broken in a special way for each one who receives it. The Church, in her concern to preserve orthodoxy, has standardized certain instructions like those of Baptism or Ordination. But even in these sacraments the priest is not dispensed from adding a word that will apply particularly to those who are receiving it. And it would be a great misfortune if “lack of time” would incline him always to read an “omnibus” text to the bridal couple. A sacrament that is at once so human and so divine demands this human and personal word without which something is lacking to the celebration. The priest is the representative of Christ, who is the “Friend” of all. It would be a most serious matter if the “discourse of marriage” were reserved for the wealthy whereas the poor were ordinarily deprived of it.

⁹ F. Marchese, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

7. THE TRADITION OF THE RING

Now that the bride and bridegroom have exchanged consents, they are married. The role of the subsequent rites is not to prepare the bridal couple but to express the now existing mystery and to bring them the blessings and graces that they henceforth will need.

The priest begins by blessing the bride's ring, then the husband receives the ring and places it on his wife's finger: "With this ring I thee wed." It is the wife who receives the ring and the husband who gives it to her as a sign of her submission and his authority. The husband need not be ashamed to be the only one to make this gesture, nor should he expect his wife to reciprocate it. Rites have a meaning, and the meaning of this rite cannot be contravened. It is not the man's dignity that is in question (in this respect husband and wife are equal), but his function. The wife also has her function, and the husband has no reason to be jealous of the fact that his wife is the "soul" of the home. Each of them must courageously, lovingly accept their service, for the good and unity of the family.

Then the priest blesses the husband and wife, this time without making any distinction between them.

8. THE MASS

The preceding ceremonies formerly took place at some distance from the altar. It was the custom in large churches and cathedrals to celebrate these rites under the portico. It is held by some that this is the reason for the artistic representations of Christ and His Church which are sometimes to be seen on porticoes. Then, after the newlyweds had kissed and enjoyed a moment of gaiety, the procession advanced toward the altar for the nuptial Mass.

It is particularly fitting that the grace of marriage be strengthened and sustained by the grace of the Eucharist. The sacrament of marriage is a sacrament of union, the Eucharistic mystery is a mystery of unity. And no union is possible without unity. Unity is the principle and consummation of union. Marriage is the symbol of the union of Christ and the Church, and in this mystery Christ honors the Church as distinct from Himself, as a free companion whom He considers equal to Himself. The Eucharist is the sacrament of the unity of Christ and of the Church, in which Bridegroom and Bride are but one Body, the Body of Christ. The Eu-

charist helps husbands and wives to strengthen their union by making of them one Bread, the living Bread that is Christ.

The Mass is the sacrament of Calvary. By bringing support to the mystery of marriage, the Eucharistic mystery in a certain sense takes up what remains of the primitive magnificence of the bridal couple's love and brings it to the glory of the new Heaven, making it pass through the bloody door of the Cross of Christ. There is no marital holiness or Christian success outside this painful passage. Tomorrow, perhaps even today, selfishness will raise its head once more, the illusions of each one concerning himself and his partner will vanish. Hard work, fatigue, sickness, sufferings that one or the other refuses to share will all militate to destroy or at least to attack the union that God has established and against which no one really has any power.

Against all these assaults the victorious Cross of Christ must be raised, and the standard of its measureless charity set up as the measure of all the sentiments of married life. The Mass is the necessary and permanent viaticum of every Christian home. Before the nuptial banquet, it is fitting that husband and wife be guests of Christ at the Eucharistic banquet.

9. THE NUPTIAL BLESSING

In the Latin Church the nuptial blessing is only a sacramental that completes the sacramental ceremony with a closing wish for length of days. The nuptial blessing is always given during the Mass. Hence it cannot be given to bridal couples who do not participate in the Mass. It is likewise refused to parties to a mixed marriage. However there is nothing to prevent a couple from asking for the nuptial blessing during a Mass, should the non-Catholic member later be converted. Indeed, these beautiful ceremonies are not useless and inefficacious prayers. The Church has great respect for them, and she invites those married couples who have not received them on their wedding day to receive them even many years later. It is the same principle by which the Church invites children who have been baptized privately to take advantage later on of the other prayers and rites of the baptismal ceremony. Finally, the nuptial blessing is not given to widows who remarry.

In the Eastern Church, the blessing is a "condition for the validity of the contract and hence of the sacrament, on a par with the pres-

ence of the authorized priest.”¹¹ This blessing is always given, even in mixed marriages, providing the bridal couple have received the dispensation to contract such a marriage.

After the ceremony, the bridal couple sign their “act of marriage,” and this is recorded by the pastor in the baptismal records of the church.

10. OTHER BLESSINGS

After the nuptial Mass, the ritual includes still other blessings: the blessing of the nuptial bed, the blessing of the wife before childbirth, thanksgiving by the wife after her deliveries. The beautiful prayers for these blessings show the profound respect the Church has for the mystery of generation. It should also be noted that churching ceremonies after childbirth are in no sense “purification” ceremonies, whether moral, or merely ritual, as was the case in Israel. It simply means that the husband and wife come to give thanks, and the liturgy expresses only joy and gratitude.

Even when viewed through the Cross, the mystery of marriage is a mystery of life, that is, a mystery of joy.

REFLECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

The theological reason for the complexity of marriage stems from the fact that it is at once a “natural institution” and, for Christians, a “sacrament of faith.” Many Christians have such a low esteem for the natural institution that they are surprised to learn that the Church considers the marriage of two pagans indissoluble. On the other hand, others do not sufficiently value the “sacrament of faith”; and in consequence two persons may enter the sacramental bond of marriage without faith or instruction, and find themselves “obligated” by the bond of the sacrament without being prepared for it and without believing in it.

Marriage is not a magic rite, any more than any of the other sacraments. It is a sacrament of faith. Indeed, the law of the Church can consider the “faith” of the subject only in its visible,

¹¹ See “Commission pontificale pour le code de l’Église orientale,” in *Proche-Orient chrétien*, July-September, 1953, p. 252. While the nuptial blessing is recognized as being necessary for validity, “it is evidently neither the sacrament nor the form of the sacrament” (*ibid.*, pp. 251-252), for this is constituted by the exchange of consents.

outward manifestation in the sacramental "profession of faith." That is why the law concerns the "baptized person" and not the "believer" who has been baptized, inasmuch as the two terms are synonymous in the mind of the Church.

But if the baptized person no longer believes, or has never lived by his faith, or received the sacrament as a child and never received instruction according to the faith of the Church, the pastor can only insist on the principles of the law. And these could "be unto death" (cf. Rom. 7:10), if he forgot the theological principle according to which the baptized person must be instructed in his faith and live by his faith. There is even a lie in the very meaning of the symbol—which, in the eyes of the Church, is a specific "profession of faith"—when a notorious "unbeliever," even if he was once baptized, makes use of the sacramental symbol without believing. Hence, it does not suffice merely to count the number of marriages celebrated in determining one's apostolic success, but rather the number who return to the faith and to the Christian life that these sacraments express and for which they offer help.

To fail to see the human value of marriages contracted according to law outside of the faith is to misjudge the natural institution of marriage. On the other hand, to distribute rites without ascertaining the faith of those who enter the marriage contract is to express scorn for the sacrament.

Family morality. Family morality cannot be reduced to the enumeration of certain laws, any more than any other aspect of the moral life. The morality of marriage is something different from what is known as the "laws of marriage." The morality of goodness—and love—presented in an earlier volume show us in what way we must think of the morality of marriage and gives us its essential elements. The following virtues are those most directly concerned with marriage:

The theological virtues. Married love consists in going from a love that is too emotional or too sensual, in which the flesh tends to dominate the spirit, to a love of charity in which every movement of the soul, including the spontaneous desire of nature, is in its place, in the "order of charity." The grace of marriage is in a special way victorious over self-love and egoism.

Prudence. There is a special familial prudence. The family is really an autonomous and complex society that demands the highest competence, spiritual understanding, and uprightness of will. Fa-

mial prudence is the virtue that makes it possible for married couples to clearly face problems and difficulties, to judge them rightly, and to make the necessary decisions that they call for.

Religion and fidelity, the virtues of "justice." These virtues, together with the virtue of temperance, regulate marital relations. Indeed, it is through the virtue of "religion," in order to give children to God, that husbands and wives are united, and it is through the virtue of fidelity that they accept their reciprocal duties, treat each other as persons, and have mutual respect. Religion and fidelity favor true love, and at the same time express it.

Trust, born of faith, of the esteem that each has for his partner, and of the promise made on their wedding day. There is no marriage without trust. Special circumstances, such as prolonged separation, can demand a particularly strong trust.

Temperance. When a man and woman get married they renounce absolute continence, but they do not renounce the virtue of chastity according to which the intellect retains mastery over all the movements of the soul that are inferior to it. The conquest of chastity, whether in marriage or outside it, demands a profound spiritual life, virtues and gifts, and in particular the gift of fear of God, and a certain discipline of life.

Temperance is the moral balance-wheel not only for the physical relations between husband and wife, but also for other family relationships. Meekness that controls anger, humility, so necessary in embarrassing admissions, as well as modesty of attire, are forms of temperance necessary to other relationships in the home. Temperance also intervenes in the devotion and affection that a mother must have for her children.

But extensive as the domain of temperance may be in the life of the home, it does not embrace the whole of family morality. A fortiori, it would be injurious to reduce the morality of marriage to a "morality of sex." Married couples must love each other with something more than "sexual love," although this love is obviously not excluded; and they have other duties than those that stem from the Sixth Commandment. An obsession with sexual morality may falsify even the conception of temperance, for this virtue cannot be authentic unless it is born of charity and quickened by it. When husbands and wives examine their consciences before confession they must, of course, consider their sins against chastity, but they

must also try to look more deeply into their hearts and not forget concomitant aspects of their lives as well.

From the moral point of view, it would be well to study the different canonical impediments that the Church has raised against marriage: their origins, their reasons, their religious and social values. There are Christians who consider some of these impediments somewhat like "taboos." Thus, the impediment of consanguinity is thought by some to involve the danger of begetting "monsters" or to be forbidden simply for eugenic or hygienic reasons, whereas in reality it is forbidden as a matter of social morality. Historical studies are instructive in this respect in that they show the religious, social, and moral origins and value of such impediments.

With regard to marriages between close blood-relatives, we know that "fraternal marriages" were not considered incestuous in the ancient Levantine civilizations. Hera and Zeus were brother and sister. Up to the time of the last Ptolemies, the Egyptian dynasties considered such marriages an easy and sure means of transmitting to successive generations the pure blood of the gods from whom the kings were descended. A knowledge of the origins of various impediments often enables us to understand their exact theological significance.

Pastoral guidance of the family. The family is a divine institution. As such, it is founded on the laws of the Church. But it is also one of the institutions that make up human society, and as such it is based upon human laws. It belongs to theology to define those aspects of the family that relate to ecclesiastical jurisdiction and those that relate to civil jurisdiction. It is also within its domain to define the rights and duties of husbands and wives, and of parents with regard to their children. This point has aroused considerable controversy during the last few years in connection with the relative merits of private and public schools. At least one thing is certain: parents are responsible for the education and instruction of their children. Moreover Christian parents have a serious responsibility for the Christian education of their children; and this does not mean that the private or parochial school will automatically be the one and only solution to the problem. Certain parents save their consciences by shedding their responsibilities on the parochial school. True, the school is at the service of the home. It carries on what parents cannot do entirely by themselves, but it is not meant to take the parents' place in any sphere.

It is a serious matter for the children of Christian parents to receive no Christian education at home, even if they do receive it at school. We might even say that it is serious especially if they receive it at school, for then their school learning will just seem like something adventitious, a "lesson" to be forgotten when school is out. Even though parents can depend upon the school for all the rest of their children's instruction, they can never entrust their education as Christians entirely to the school. This education must begin in the home, from the cradle, and be constantly transmitted by the Christian life of the home. In this, the school, no matter how good it is, can only be an aid.

What we have said of the school applies in the same way to the catechism classes that children may attend in their parish. Parents must not be ignorant of the teaching and education received in catechism classes. Excellent as this education may be, its efficacy will be very limited if the child does not find at home a receptive soil in which to ripen the seed that the Word of the priest or catechist has sowed in his soul.

Whence the extraordinary importance of the pastoral theology of the home considered as a home, and the need for parents to learn their "role" or "profession" as parents. It is their responsibility to make a careful study of the Christian principles of education, of the possible techniques of teaching, tests, sanctions, active methods, etc. And yet the best part of education will always remain outside the confines of "techniques." No "school for parents" or diplomas can turn out perfect parents. Parents must strive to create a climate of Christian family living by all sorts of means including prayer in common, but above all by fostering a spirit of faith and charity in the home.

The family movements. The contemporary fact of the many and varied "family movements" calls for the reflection of theologians and pastors. In this connection it seems useless and perhaps even harmful to distinguish the functions of theologian and pastor. The pastor who reflects on his pastoral actions is theologizing, just as Monsieur Jourdain was unwittingly speaking prose. The theologian who studies the "mystery of the home" or reflects on the means put to work by "family movements" cannot make such a study in an ivory tower. For the life of souls is not to be found in books; and to study it purely in the abstract would be bad theology. Actually,

pastoral contacts with homes must be one of the conditions and elements of his theology.

Formerly, the only communities of homes were the parishes. The fact that communities of homes and "family movements" on both a national and international scale can be extraneous to parish life poses questions as to the evolution or lack of evolution of these parishes: first, as to the legitimacy of this evolution; and second, as to the new needs of families that the parish does not or cannot fully satisfy. In what manner has the parish evolved or ceased to evolve? What are the new needs of homes and families? Finally, we can ask why the life of the family finds a spiritual advantage in meeting with other families. Is it simply a matter of taste or temperament that leads certain couples to join a family movement, whereas others, feeling united in their home, prefer to carry on their activities outside the home individually—for instance, the husband being a militant member of a professional Catholic Action group and the wife taking part in a Catholic movement of wives and mothers? Can theology clarify the advantages and disadvantages of the two formulas?

The theology and pastoral guidance of women. Just as the Church, which is the "Spouse" of Christ, is also the "Family" of the children of God, so the married woman is at once a wife and also the personification of her entire family. That is why reflections on the home cannot help being reflections on woman; and inversely reflection on woman cannot help touching upon her principal role, which is her supreme vocation: her maternal role. We might even add briefly here that all theology on woman and the home must ultimately stem from a theology of the Blessed Virgin and a theology of the Church (see A.-M. Henry, "Le mystère de l'homme et de la femme," in *La Vie Spirituelle*, May, 1949, pp. 463-490; also "Virginité de l'Église, virginité de Marie," in *Bull. de la Soc. franç. d'ét. mariales*, Paris, Lethielleux, 1954).

The present-day emancipation of women calls for something more than a sentimental acceptance of it or an equally unreasoning protest against it. In woman's present emancipated state, how much stems from a sociological trend and is as contingent as such a trend, and how much stems from women's vocation as God has willed it? In other words, can the "feminism" that attributes the same functions, the same rights, and the same duties to men and women be wholly Christian? And if it is not, wherein lie the differ-

ences in functions, rights, and duties? We shall merely suggest two possible ways of answering this question:

On the one hand we know that man and woman have the same divine origin, the same destiny, and the same Christian vocation. Their persons are equal. The difference can only come from the diverse roles or functions that have been given them first of all by God, and concomitantly by the Church and by society. What are these various functions? What roles does the Church expect of each of them in society? (See in addition to the articles cited above, Gertrude Von Le Fort, *Eternal Woman*, and *Spiritualité de la famille*, a collection of articles in "Recontres," Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1944.)

On the other hand woman's emancipation is a liberation from a certain guardianship; it is a coming of age of sorts, and the attainment of the type of liberty that adulthood presupposes. It can be defined only in relation to the correlative terms of majority, liberty, guardianship, and slavery. Are we speaking of spiritual liberty? The Christian knows that this liberty does not depend essentially upon a certain type of life. The prisoner can be free if he accepts his chains for Christ's sake. The freedman is a slave if he is constantly the victim of his selfishness or his sensuality. Since true self is in the mind and the spirit, true liberty is the liberty of the just man. And true slavery is the slavery of sin that imposes upon the mind dictates that are contrary to right reason.

Are we speaking of social liberty? Then we desire that everything and every person be "in order" within society. Whatever is in its right place, and as we say, "in its element," usually finds its liberty within this very place. Thus, a fish in water can be said to be free. Only sin, which is contrary to right reason, can prevent a man from being "free" when he is in his rightful place in society. Social liberty does not have the power to produce spiritual liberty, but it can favor it. The soul of the person who is enslaved by society must be heroic to attain interior freedom of spirit.

When we speak of the emancipation of woman we are speaking primarily of her social emancipation. We must therefore know exactly what her role or function is in the family, in the Church, and in society. But this is not the most important liberty. True liberty is interior and spiritual. The woman who is socially emancipated is not necessarily spiritually free. Regardless of external circumstances, there can be no true liberty when sentiment, senti-

mentality, and the emotions, instead of the intellect, rule; and when decisions are reached immediately on the basis of passion and sentiment rather than right reason. Emancipation is not only a social question. It is also a matter of educating a young girl and a woman. Nor must it be forgotten that it is also a matter of grace.

Here are some other questions: pastoral theology must study the lives of all women: not only wives and mothers, but widows, consecrated virgins and "involuntary celibates," young girls and "working" wives. What is the significance and role of widows in the Church? Concerning the role of widows in the Apostolic Church, see Acts 6:1; I Tim. 5:3-16. Also study the theme of "the widowed Church," according to the Fathers of the Church. For information on widows' movements in present-day France, see the periodical *Offertoire*, Paris, Ed. du Feu nouveau, *passim*. Concerning the meaning of virginity in the Church and the role of virgins, see A.-M. Henry, "Le mystère de la virginité, in *Chasteté*, in the Collection: "La Religieuse d'aujourd'hui," Paris, Ed. du Cerf, 1953, pp. 93-114, and attached bibliography. On the "vocation" of involuntary celibates, see *La Vie Spirituelle*, April, 1949, "Une vocation, le célibat involontaire," by S. Leuret, S. Fouché, A. Plé, etc., pp. 373-422. On the education of young girls and the preparation of engaged girls for marriage, many articles and references are available in various periodicals devoted to the family, especially *L'Anneau d'or*, and *Foyers*. On working women, read Michèle Aumont's book, *Femmes en usine*, Paris, Spes, 1953, and *Dialogues de la vie ouvrière*, Paris, Spes, 1953.

The rites of marriage. An excellent study of the rites of marriage has been made by A.-C. Croegaert, *La liturgie nuptiale*, Lophem-les-Bruges, 1938.

Theological studies based on the liturgy as their source will benefit by referring to the rites of the non-Latin Churches and making comparisons between them.

On the nuptial liturgy in the Byzantine rite, a very useful and accessible work is that of E. Mercenier and F. Paris, *La prière des Églises de rite byzantin*, Chevetogne, 1937, Vol. I, pp. 397-416. There are two parts to the Byzantine rite: the ritual of the ring, formerly the ritual of betrothal, which now immediately precedes the ritual of the crowning (second part). In the ritual of the ring, the symbolism of the ring is developed at length by means of certain figures from the Old Testament, and the meaning of marriage

is set forth (cf. the prayer: "Lord, our God who hast chosen from among all the nations the pure virgin which is the Church to be Your Spouse. . ."). The ritual of the crowning has magnificent prayers, and its rites are filled with joyful symbolism. The Byzantine liturgy has a special ritual for those who are marrying for the second time or more. In these ceremonies, the accent is less upon the joy that is normally expected in such festivities than upon God's mercy who forgives all sin and upon the need for conversion. In principle, this shift in emphasis is a manifestation of the disfavor with which the Church looks upon remarriage.

The Church has special legislation for marriages contracted under the dispensation of difference in religion or disparity of worship. The Church does not want these marriages to be celebrated within the church, but only in the sacristy, except for dispensations sometimes given for mixed marriages. It is good to explain to the non-Catholic party and even to the faithful the meaning of this exclusion, which is not a lack of mercy and still less a sign of scorn for the unbeliever or the non-Catholic. But the Church is a mother and not a harsh stepmother. Her rites, her ceremonies, and above all her sacraments and maternal attentions must be first of all for her own children. Indeed, how could the unbeliever be expected to want to enter the Church if he received as much or more honor and attention during the period of his unbelief as he did afterwards? God's family gladly kills the fatted calf for the unbeliever who comes back to the fold or who enters her portals for the first time. But she does not arrange festive celebrations for those who are not yet in the fold. Instead, she—that is, the family of those who are faithful to her and can participate in her sacraments—prays for them.

The marriage of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. We have already noted that the Christian theology of marriage has never lost sight of the marriage of Mary and Joseph, as recorded in Scripture. Inasmuch as this marriage is a fact and a source, the theology of marriage must give an explanation of it as of every other marriage. A theology that defined marriage not in terms of consent but immediately as the work of the flesh would not correspond to the total deposit and could not claim to be entirely Christian.

But how can we reconcile the first end of marriage, which is procreation, with this fact, or rather this intention? In other words, apart from this exceptional and unique case, can we hold that a

husband and wife who married with the firm intention of each maintaining their virginity would be contracting a valid marriage?

To speak of a true marriage, or a valid marriage, or a perfect marriage is all one. These expressions are synonymous. Now we must note that in marriage as in everything else there are two types of perfection: first perfection and second perfection. The first perfection of a thing is the perfection of its form (cf. *Lexicon*). The second perfection, which in the last analysis is the only one that deserves the name of perfection, is that of the thing considered in the very act by which it attains its end. It is already a perfection for a house to exist, that is, to be built, but it is a second perfection for it to be livable and effectively inhabited. If the house is uninhabitable for extrinsic reasons, no matter how beautiful it is or how well-built, something is lacking to its perfection. A knife may be very beautiful and made of precious metal such as gold, but if it does not cut it is a bad knife. Let us apply these considerations to the question now before us. The form or first perfection of marriage consists in the indissoluble union of two persons, a union by virtue of which each of the contracting parties remains absolutely faithful to the other. Now the end of marriage consists in the procreation and education of children.

Thus if we consider the first perfection of marriage, the union between the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph was a true marriage since they gave their mutual consent and since they were entirely submissive to God's good pleasure in advance, even though they implicitly agreed not to perform the marital act (St. Thomas Aquinas says: *quasi implicite*, *In Matt.*, cap. 1). Mary's vow of virginity was conditional in this respect: providing it was God's good pleasure.

But if we consider the second perfection of marriage, we can say that the truly unique union between Mary and Joseph did not attain its term. And yet from another point of view it did attain its term. With regard to the procreation of children, which is the culmination of the marital act, this union did not attain its term. But with regard to the education of the Child, or at least His care and growth, the marriage of Mary and Joseph attained its second perfection. Thus St. Augustine writes: "In Christ's parents we find all the good that is attached to the wedding ceremony: a child, marital fidelity, a sacrament. We know the Child, who is the Lord Jesus. We find marital fidelity because there was never any adultery.

We recognize the sacrament since there was unity without divorce. Only one thing is lacking: the marital act" (*De nupt. et concup.*, lib. 1, i, cap. 11, 12, cited by St. Thomas, *Summa*, IIIa, q. 29, a. 2). It seems that this suffices to show in what sense (and in the only sense, according to St. Thomas) the marriage of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph is a true marriage, a valid and "perfect" marriage.

We see what was necessary for the marriage of Mary and Joseph to be a perfect marriage, relatively speaking. Obviously, such a "marriage" could exist in any other circumstances only exceptionally or even miraculously, for it would call for the explicit expression of God's will. The sacrament of Matrimony, therefore, is not meant merely to seal the "friendship" of those who want to remain virgins, but primarily to bless and, in a certain respect, to consecrate the home in view of generation and education of offspring, through which marital friendship is normally built.

There have been cases when husbands and wives, before they consummated their marriage, discovered they both had a vocation to virginity and separated to enter the religious life. Moreover we see that the history of the Church offers us beautiful examples of pure and profound friendships between men and women saints who were not married to one another. St. Teresa of Avila, in referring to her beloved "father" and "son," Father Jerome Gracian of the Mother of God, rejoiced over "the extreme mercy of the marry-er (*el casamentero*) Christ Himself, who united them to one another so closely that they will not be separated by death but united forever" (M. Auclair, *Teresa of Avila*, Pantheon, 1953). We could likewise cite the beautiful friendships between St. Catherine of Siena and Blessed Raymond of Capua, between St. Dominic and Blessed Diana of Andalo, between St. Francis of Assisi and St. Clare, etc.

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Finally, mention should be made of the many publications of "Éditions du feu nouveau," "l'Association du mariage chrétien," "Vie Nouvelle," and of such reviews as *L'Anneau d'or*, *Foyers, Terre et ciel*, *The Grail* (St. Meinrad's, Ind.).

SHORT LEXICON OF THEOLOGICAL TERMS ¹

ABBOT. From a Hebrew word, "Abbas," which means "father"; the father of a monastery (abbey).

ABSTRACTION. Fundamentally, the act by which the active intellect disengages the intelligible from the material thing in which it is found. "Total abstraction" (that, for example, which disengages the species "man" from the genus "animal" in the subject, James) is distinguished from "formal abstraction" (that of the mathematician who considers only the quantitative aspect of beings). Thus there are distinguished three degrees of abstraction which correspond to the levels of intelligibility: physical, mathematical, metaphysical.

ACADEMY. (Phil.).² The school of Plato's philosophy.

ACCIDENT. See **PREDICAMENTAL ACCIDENT.**

ACOLYTE. From a Greek word meaning "companion" or "follower." One who accompanies and follows higher ministers. The fourth and last of the minor orders in the Latin Church.

ACT. That which is finished or

perfect in its own order, as opposed to what is only potential. 1. *Entitative act* (first act). The act by which a thing simply and formally is what it is. 2. *Operative act* (second act). Designates the activity or operation of a thing, which supposes that it is already in first act. 3. *Pure act*. An act which excludes all potentiality; only God is pure act. See **ACTUAL.**

ACTION (*actio, actus*). 1. Designates for a subject the fact of acting or operating. Action is one of the nine categories of accidents (it is opposed to passion). 2. *Transitive action*. That which has its term outside the subject and perfects or modifies something other than itself: e.g., to burn, to cut. 3. *Immanent action*. That which has its term in the acting subject and which perfects the subject, e.g., to think, to will. (G).³

ACTUAL. That which is in act as opposed to that which is in potency and which may be called potential or virtual. **ACTUAL GRACE:** Transitory divine motion (in opposition to habitual grace, possessed after the fashion of a habit). **ACTUAL SIN:** A

¹ This Lexicon also includes technical terms in the fields of exegesis, philosophy, and the liturgy, which the theologian must take cognizance of.

² The abbreviations Phil., Theol., Christol., Metaph., Psycho., Mor., Log., signify that the definitions are to be understood as: philosophical, theological, Christological, metaphysical, psychological, moral, and logical.

³ The letter G at the end of a definition means that it has been taken from Gardeil's "Vocabulaire technique," in his *Initiation à la philosophie de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Vol. IV, Paris, Cerf, 1952, pp. 213-233. The letter L is a similar reference to A. Lalande, *Vocabulaire de philosophie*, Vol. I and II, Paris, P.U.F., 1926. The letters B.F. refer to the biblical and liturgical lexicon in the *Bréviaire des Fidèles*, Paris, Labergerie, 1951, pp. 1251-1262.

fault which is a personal act (in opposition to original sin).

ADOPTIONISM. A Christological heresy professed by Theodotus about 190 A.D. He taught that the Word, confused with the Holy Spirit, had descended upon Jesus, on the day of His Baptism and had raised Him to the rank of the divine by adopting Him.

AGAPE. From the verb *ἀγαπᾶν*: the love of friendship. In the New Testament, the substantive designates especially the love of God the Father, which is the source of the mission of the Son, then of the Holy Spirit, and finally of the Apostles and of the spread of charity throughout the world. Cf. Vol. IV, pp. 134-154. It also occasionally designates the ecclesiastical community which is in fact founded on love.

AGENT. (Metaph.) Subject, person or thing that acts. Opposed to patient. (G).

"AGIBILE." Whatever belongs to the domain of immanent action or of morality; more precisely whatever can be the object of a "human act" as such. It is opposed to *factibile*, which designates the object of material production.

AGNOSTICISM. A doctrine which asserts that there exists an order of unknowable realities about which nothing can be said with certainty.

ALLEGORY. Concrete symbolism carried through an entire story or representation so that the symbolic elements correspond exactly to the elements signified. (L).

ALTERATION. See CHANGE.

ALTRUISM. The feeling of love for another. Uninformed by faith, this feeling is not "charity." Also, the moral doctrine that makes interest in our fellowmen, as such, the final end of human conduct.

ANABAPTISTS. Heretics of the sixteenth century who rejected infant

Baptism and submitted their adherents to a second Baptism.

ANAGOGY. The interpretation of Scripture by which one goes from the literal to the spiritual sense.

ANALOGICAL. 1. A property of a concept or term which relates it to others by a meaning partly similar and partly different. It is opposed to univocal and equivocal. 2. Principal divisions: Analogy of "attribution"—a term which applies to several things by reason of their relation to some other thing (first analogy); for example, the term "healthy," which applies to a remedy, to urine, to medicine, by reason of the relation that these have with the animal which is formally healthy. Analogy of "proportionality"—that of a concept or term that applies to several things by reason of something intrinsically common or a similarity of relationship: e.g., vision—physical or intellectual. (G).

ANAMNESIS. From the Greek word meaning remembrance, commemoration. In the Greek liturgy it designates that part of the Mass which immediately follows the Consecration; it is the "Unde et Memores" of the Roman Mass.

ANAPHORA. The chief part of the Mass in the different liturgies of the Eastern Rite. The anaphora corresponds to the Roman Canon.

ANCHORITE. From the Greek verb meaning "to go apart." A religious who retires temporarily or permanently from the common life in order to lead the life of a hermit.

ANGLICAN (Church). The schismatic Church of England.

ANIMISM. The religion of those who believe in the presence of anthropomorphic souls in all natural creatures.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM. The term is applied to all reasoning which applies notions drawn from human

nature or human conduct in order to explain non-human things (for instance: God, physical phenomena, biological life, animal conduct, etc.) (L).

"**APATHEIA.**" Complete indifference to everything. See Vol. III, pp. 147-150.

APHTHARTODOCETISM. A Monophysite sect (sixth century) according to which Christ, from the moment of His Incarnation, had an impassible and immortal body, and suffered only by an act of His will and, as it were, miraculously.

APOCATASTASIS. Origen's theory of the ultimate restoration of all intelligent creatures (even the damned and demons purified by fire) to God's friendship. Cf. Vol. IV, p. 94.

APOCRYPHA. Books neither authentic nor inspired, whose origin is unknown or suspect, and which ought not to be confused with the books of Scripture with which they have apparent similarities.

APOLOGETICS. That part of theology concerned with the defense of Christianity.

APOLOGY. Defense or justification. The Apologies were provoked in the second century by the suspicions and imputations to which Christianity was subjected.

APOTHEGM. A saying of an illustrious person. (Certain pronouncements of Christ in the Gospel. Sayings of the Fathers of the Desert.)

APOSTASY. The act of placing oneself outside of, or of separating from, a constituted body to which one belongs. Three sins of apostasy are distinguished: Apostasy from the faith (the sin of those who break away from the faith of the Church); religious apostasy (the sin of a religious who leaves the Order in which he has made profession); apostasy from the priesthood (the sin of a priest who abandons sacred orders).

APOSTLE. A Greek word which means "envoy." Designates in the first place the Twelve chosen by Christ and sent by Him to preach the Gospel; in the second place the bishops, successors of the "Twelve Apostles," and all those in the Church who are sent to announce the Gospel of Christ.

APPETITE. 1. Designates in a general way the inclination or tendency following from the nature of a being. 2. Natural (or innate) appetite. The purely passive ordering of a being to its end, according to its natural form; e.g., the tendency of a stone to fall toward the earth, according to ancient physics. It is the only tendency found in non-sentient beings. In beings endowed with knowledge, appetite signifies the radical ordering of the faculties toward their end: the ordering of the intellect to the true, of the will to the good. 3. Animal appetite. In beings endowed with knowledge, the faculty or actual inclination which follows the apprehension of a form or sensible image; "intellectual" appetite, or will, results when the antecedent knowledge is rational. (G).

APPREHENSION. 1. (Metaph.). The act by which the intellect simply grasps an object without affirming or denying anything about it. Simple apprehension is the first of the three operations of the mind (apprehension, judgment, reasoning). The term apprehension is also applied to the act of sense knowledge. 2. The non-technical meaning, in which apprehension signifies a vague fear, must not be confused with the metaphysical meaning of the word.

APPROPRIATION. (Log.). The act by which a common noun is made to serve as a proper one; i.e., *urbs* (the city) for Rome, "the city of cities." In Trinitarian theology, the act by which a common or essential

attribute (wisdom, for example, insofar as it pertains to the Three Persons) is applied exclusively to one of the Persons, i.e., the Son. It is thus that St. Paul designates the Three Persons by the words *God, Lord, Spirit* (I Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:4-6, etc.). Cf. Vol. II, pp. 169-170, 175.

ARCANUM. The expression *disciplina arcani* (discipline of the secret) refers to the law in force during the first centuries of Christianity which forbade the faithful and the clergy from ever speaking openly of the holy mysteries in front of catechumens or unbelievers.

ARCHBISHOP. The head of an ecclesiastical province. Also called Metropolitan.

ARCHDEACON. In the beginning, the head of the diaconal college. At the time when rural parishes were entrusted to the care of deacons, the archdeacon was charged by the bishop with the supervision of one of the rural sectors of his diocese. Today, the office is a dignity of one of the members of the diocesan hierarchy.

ARCHETYPE. The ultimate form, the ideal prototype of things.

ARCHPRIEST. Formerly, the first of the priests in the bishop's entourage, and the one who replaced him at Solemn Mass in his absence. In the provinces, the archpriest was the leader of a community of clerics. Today, the dignity is granted to the pastors of certain cathedral and collegial churches.

ARIANISM. The heresy of Arius who held that Christ had been created and not generated. Cf. Vol. I, pp. 149-151.

ART. 1. Objectively, or physically, designates the extrinsic principle, of rational character, of an operation: e.g., the art of making in view of a final plan. It is opposed to *nature*,

the immanent principle of activity. Art comprises the domain of the fabricated, as opposed to that of the natural. 2. Considered in reference to its subject, art is a *habitus*, that is to say, a stable disposition perfecting the subject in a given order of activity. Under this aspect, it is that one of the five intellectual virtues which governs productive activity. (G).

ASCETICAL. Has reference to asceticism; that is to say, the exercise of a life of virtue, renunciation, and mortification. *Asceticism*: the doctrine of asceticism.

ASEITY. The property of existing without dependence on another. Strictly, "aseity" applies only to God and is His fundamental attribute.

ATTRIBUTE. 1. (Log.). The term of a proposition stating what is affirmed or denied of a subject. Synonym: predicate. 2. (Metaph.) The attributes of God, or the different aspects of His nature. (G).

ATTRIBUTION. 1. The act of referring the predicate to the subject. Synonym: predication. In scholastic Latin this act is also signified by the verb *to say* (*dicere*). There are different modes of attribution: *per se*, accidentally, etc. 2. One of the forms of analogy (i.e., of attribution). (G).

ATTRITION. An interior movement of sorrow for sin, in which charity as yet plays no part. Because of this, it is insufficient for justification. Cf. Vol. VI, pp. 232 ff.

AXIOM. A self-evident proposition governing a whole series of demonstrations. Equivalent expressions are: first principles, *dignitates*, *maximae propositiones*, propositions *per se notae* (self-evident).

BEATITUDE. 1. Objectively, the state of perfection of a reasonable being who has attained his ultimate perfection. 2. Subjectively, the felt joy

in the conscious possession of the supreme good. (G).

BEING. (*ens, esse*). 1. Expresses the relationship of essence to the act of being or existence. 2. Real being (actual or possible). That which exists or can exist. It is this being considered as such that is the object of metaphysics. *Intentional being*: what can exist only in the intellect conceiving it. Being is an analogous term which includes numerous meanings or divisions. (G).

BISHOP. From a Greek word meaning "overseer." A successor of the Apostles charged with the supervision, generally, of a local Church. The Church is governed by bishops, equal among themselves and presided over by the Bishop of Rome (the Pope). *Coadjutor Bishop*: a bishop given as an assistant to an episcopal see. *Auxiliary Bishop*: office given to the person of a bishop, without right of succession.

BREVIARY. The official abridgment of the Divine Office, or the Prayer of the Church.

BULL. A Pontifical letter of a particularly solemn sort.

CANON. From a Greek word meaning "rule," or "directive." 1. In early ecclesiastical language it is used especially to indicate the rule of faith or even the rule of discipline. 2. The word, in the East, designating the arrangement of the odes of the morning service for the Divine Office; in the West, the rule for the hours of the Divine Office. 3. It also means: the collection of the authentic books of Holy Scripture; the rule for finding the feast of Easter; a monastic rule; an ecclesiastical constitution. 4. From the sixth century on, in the West, it has referred to the most solemn part of the Eucharistic prayer. 5. *Canons*. In the beginning, clerics inscribed in the "canon" or rule of a church.

Today, the term is reserved to certain priests and indicates a rank of dignity. The former function of canons, which consisted chiefly in the celebration of the Office, persists among the *canons regular*, diocesan religious by origin and in their present-day ministry.

CANONICAL HOURS. The regular hours of the Church's prayer; more precisely, the prayers said officially at these hours.

CANONIZATION. The process by which the Church judges the Christian perfection and merits of a deceased member in view of presenting him to all as a "saint." (See SAINT.)

CAPPADOCIANS. THE. Fathers of the Church of the sixth century, originating in Cappadocia. See Vol. I, pp. 158-160, 343 and Vol. II, pp. 154-155.

CASUISTRY. The science that applies theological conclusions to different cases of human conduct or practice, with a view to a concrete decision as to what is permitted or forbidden. Casuistry runs a grave risk of coming to regard morality as a function of law.

CATECHESIS. From the Greek word meaning "to resound," or the act of teaching orally, of giving elementary instruction. It is in this sense that it is used in the N.T. After the organization of the catechumenate, it was applied particularly to preparation for Baptism.

CATECHISM. Elementary religious teaching given to baptized children.

CATECHUMEN. A convert who is under instruction for Baptism.

CATECHUMENATE. An organized group being prepared for Baptism, or the state of those being so prepared.

CATEGORIES. (Ordinarily designated by the Latin synonym *praedicamenta*.) The ultimate genera of

being, that is to say, substance and the nine "accidents": quantity, quality, relation, action, passion, place, time, position, possession. (G).

CATHEDRA. The chair from which the master or pastor teaches. The Pope enjoys infallibility when he teaches "ex cathedra," that is to say, in the official and solemn exercise of his office as supreme pastor and teacher of all Christians, and in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority.

CATHEDRAL. A church where the bishop's chair is located.

CATHOLIC. From the Greek word meaning "universal." One of the marks of the Church. See Vol. I, p. 112.

"CATHOLICOS." A title of certain heads of Churches (analogous to patriarch).

CAUSALITY. Properly means the very act of causing, that is to say, the effective production of something. There are as many sorts of causality as there are kinds of causes. (G).

CAUSE. 1. *In the real order.* That upon which something depends for its being and its becoming. A cause must be anterior to its effect, really distinct from it and the dependence of the effect must be real. 2. *In the order of explanation.* A cause is that which explains or gives the reason for a thing. Thus science is called the knowledge of causes. 3. Division into 4 species: *Material cause:* that of which a thing is made and which remains immanent to it. *Formal cause:* that which determines a thing in some mode of being. *Efficient cause:* that from which the first beginning of change or rest comes. *Final cause:* that on account of which something is done. 4. *Principal cause:* that which produces its effect by its own power. 5. *Instru-*

mental cause: that which acts only by another's motion. (G).

CENOBITE. One who leads the common life. Opposed to hermit.

CHANGE. (Mutation, movement). 1. In a general way, any transformation of a natural being. 2. Divisions: *substantial change* (generation, corruption)—change terminating in a new substance; *accidental change:* a subsequent modification of the same substance—*alteration*, relative to quality; *increase, decrease*, relative to quantity; *local motion*, relative to place. (G).

CHARACTER. See SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER.

CHARISMS. Graces given for the common good of the Church. Cf. Vol. IV, pp. 618-637.

CHARITY. 1. A theological virtue which is the spiritual love of God and neighbor. 2. In a secondary sense, an act commanded by the theological virtue of charity. For example, to give an alms.

CHERUBIM. In Hebrew, *keroubim*, fantastic beings. Designates one of the categories of angels.

CHOREPISCOPUS. From the Greek word *episcopus*, meaning overseer. A sort of auxiliary bishop who in times past replaced the bishop in the rural sections of his diocese.

CHRISTOLOGY. That part of theology relating to Christ.

CHURCH. 1. From the Greek word *kyriakon*, the Lord's house. The Church is the convocation or assembly of those who believe in Jesus Christ. 2. The building where Christians come together for the celebration of the Eucharist. 3. *Individual Church:* a local Church endowed with a certain measure of autonomy, e.g., a diocese.

CIRCUMINCESSION. The theological term expressing the mutual penetration of the Three Divine

Persons in their essence, their origin, and their relations.

COGNITIVE. 1. One of the four interior senses, which determines whether the object perceived by the senses is useful or harmful to the subject. 2. To the *cognitive*, which is proper to man, corresponds the *estimative* in the animal. For example, the lamb flees from the wolf through an instinctive grasp of danger by his estimative sense. The cognitive is a sort of estimative power of the intellectual order.

COLLEGIAL CHURCH. A church belonging to a college of canons.

COMMANDED ACT. An act of one virtue commanded and informed by another. It is opposed to an elicited act. For example, fasting, which is an act elicited by the virtue of temperance can also be a commanded act of the virtue of penance.

COMMON SENSE. One of the internal senses whose function is to take cognizance of the activity of the various external senses and to compare and evaluate the data received through them. (G).

COMMUNION. 1. Union in one and the same faith. 2. The act by which one receives the sacrament of Christ's Body. 3. The sacrament itself (i.e., the expression, "to receive Communion"). 4. The antiphon sung during Communion.

COMMUTATIVE JUSTICE. That which governs mutual relationships of individuals or institutions, or of the latter with the former. Cf. Vol. IV, pp. 338-339.

COMPREHENSION. 1. (Log.). The sum total of notes represented in a concept and distinguishing it from other concepts; e.g., "man" includes in its comprehension the notes of substantiality, life, animality, rationality. It is opposed to extension. 2. (Psycho.). The act which grasps an

object intellectually, knowing it thoroughly. (G).

CONCELEBRATION. The common action of several priests hierarchically celebrating and effectively consecrating the Eucharist together. (See SYNCHRONIZED MASSES.) Such action in common may occur in other sacraments and functions.

CONCOMITANCE. The condition of two things which maintain a regular relationship with one another, whether of simultaneity or variation. In the sacramental theology of the Eucharist, what is present under each of the species in virtue of the sacramental sign (*ex vi sacramenti*) is distinguished from what is present by natural concomitance (*ex naturali concomitantia*). *Ex vi sacramenti*, the bread contains only the Body and not the Blood; *ex naturali concomitantia*, the bread now contains the glorified body, the blood, soul, and divinity, which are inseparable in the actual "substance" of Christ in heaven.

CONCUPISCIBLE. The power of the sense appetite that has as its object simply the good to be acquired or the evil to be avoided. It is distinguished from the *irascible* power, which seeks the good "difficult to obtain" or flees evil "difficult" to avoid. Cf. Vol. III, pp. 172-173. (G).

CONFESS. In Biblical language, to praise, laud, extol, commend, acknowledge. *Confession of Faith*: synonymous with acknowledgment of faith, profession of faith, witness to the faith. Martyrdom is the supreme act of the confession of faith. *Confession of sins*: recollection and avowal of the acts by which one has offended God.

CONGREGATION. Assembly. *Religious Congregation*: a society of religious men or women with simple vows. (See ORDER.) *Roman Congregations*: Committees in Rome charged

with the general government of the Church.

CONSCIENCE. For the scholastics, the act by which we apply what we know to what we do. For moderns, conscience is the interior state governing moral action. In sound theology, only prudence assures such regulatory action.

CONSENSUS. The agreement of all men on certain propositions considered as proof of the truth of these propositions.

CONSUBSTANTIALITY. The theological term adopted by the Council of Nicea (ὁμοουσιος) in order to define the unity of substance and nature of the Incarnate Word and the Father.

CONTINGENT. That which is able not to be, or which is not its own reason for existing. It is opposed to *necessary*: that which is not able not to be, or to be other than it is. All created things are contingent. (G).

CONTRADICTION. 1. The property of mutually exclusive concepts which allow of no middle term: e.g., white, not white. 2. *Contradictory propositions* are those of which one affirms absolutely what the other denies. Such propositions differ both quantitatively and qualitatively, e.g.: "Every man is just." "Some men are not just." Contradiction is the most radical mode of opposition. The principle of contradiction is the basic law of thought. (G).

CONTRARY. 1. Property of concepts that are mutually exclusive in the same subject, but which remain in the same genus. E.g., White-black (belong to the same genus: color). 2. *Contrary propositions* are those that are opposed only in terms of quality: e.g.: "Every man is just." "No man is just." (G).

CONTRITION. Sorrow necessary for justification. Cf. Vol. VI, p. 232 ff. The expression *perfect contrition* is often understood in two different

ways: 1. Theologically, it means that the contrition is perfect or formed (see **FORM**) by charity. 2. Psychologically, it indicates an intense sorrow. In the sentence: "Contrition justifies the penitent sinner," the word contrition is to be understood in the first sense.

CONVERSION. 1. (Theol.). In an active sense, the act of converting or leading unbelievers to the faith; in a passive sense, the condition of one who has been converted. 2. *Conversion of (believing) sinners.* The return to God's friendship. 3. In the Theology of the religious state, the act of one who leaves the world to enter religion. In a restricted sense, it is now used to indicate the state of professed religious who are neither monks nor clerics ("conversi"). These latter are commonly known as lay brothers and lay sisters.

COPULA. The verb *to be* insofar as it expresses the relationship of subject to predicate in a sentence: e.g., Peter is a man. (G).

CORRUPTION. Change by which a substance is destroyed. Correlative of *generation*, a change which culminates in a new substance. Every corruption is necessarily accompanied by a generation. (G).

COSMOGONY. System or theory of the formation of the universe.

COSMOLOGY. Science of the laws governing the universe.

COUNSEL. In its technical and precise meaning, it is the deliberative phase of the human act preparatory to the choice of means. See Vol. III, pp. 103 and 131-132. *Evangelical Counsels.* The three ways of life (exterior poverty, continence, and subjection to a superior) which were not commanded but counseled by our Lord. See Vol. III, pp. 720-723.

COVENANT. The arrangement by which God contracted an irrevocable

union with the chosen people. Sometimes called "testament."

CREDIBILITY. The capability for belief of an assertion revealed by God.

"DE CONDIGNO" AND "DE CONGRUO." See **MERIT**.

DEACON. From a Greek word meaning "servant." In the beginning, one who was charged with the service of external charity. The first of the major orders of the priesthood.

DEISM. A system which, while accepting the thesis of a personal God, does not admit His revelatory action.

DEMIURGE. A term by which Plato, in the *Timaeus*, designates the divine maker of the universe, who is the soul of the world and is distinct from the inferior gods created by him and entrusted by him with the creation of mortal beings. Some Gnostics looked on the Demiurge as the creator and organizer of the world, distinct from the God who is the supreme organizer and whose act is even considered by some of them as being sinful. (L).

DEPOSIT OF FAITH. The totality of Revelation, or any element of it, that the theologian must explicate or honor.

DETERMINISM. 1. A philosophical doctrine according to which all the events of the universe and, in particular, human actions are so related that things being what they are at any given moment of time, for every instant either before or after, there is one state and one alone that will be compatible with it. 2. The philosophical doctrine according to which certain events are fixed beforehand by a power exterior to and superior to the will, in such wise that whatever one does is done necessarily. (L).

DEUTEROCANONICAL. See **PROTOCANONICAL**.

DEUTERONOMIST. One of the traditions of which the Pentateuch is

composed. See **YAHWIST**, **ELOHIST**, **PRIESTLY CODE**.

DIALECTICS. Aristotle distinguished *dialectics* from *analytics*; while the latter has demonstration as its object, that is to say, deduction following from true premises, *dialectics* has as its object reasoning bearing on probable opinions. In the Middle Ages, dialectics was equated with formal logic and was contrasted with rhetoric. Together with rhetoric and grammar, it made up the three branches of the *trivium*. At the present time, dialectics is defined as an explanatory process which proceeds by way of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

DIASPORA. The community of the Jews *dispersed* among the "nations."

DICASTERY. From a Greek word meaning "tribunal." The name given to the congregations, offices, and tribunals of the Roman Curia. There are actually eleven congregations (the Holy Office, the Consistorial Congregation, the Congregations of the Sacraments, of the Council, of Religious, of the Propagation of the Faith, Rites, Ceremonies, Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, Seminaries and Universities, and the Congregation for the Eastern Church), three tribunals (the Sacred Penitentiary, the Rota, and the Signature), five offices (Chancery, Dateria, Apostolic Chamber, Secretariat of State, Secretariat of Briefs to Princes and Latin Letters). To which there should be added several commissions.

"**DIDACHE**" OR **TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.** See Vol I, pp. 149-150, and Vol. II, p. 325. In theology the "**Didache**" also designates the instruction given to the newly baptized.

DIDASCALIA OF THE APOSTLES. The teaching of the Twelve Apostles and disciples of our Lord in an ec-

clesiastical document of the third century. A teaching more fully developed than the simple *Kerygma* which see.

DIFFERENCE. 1. In general, that by which one thing is distinguished from another. 2. *Specific difference*: that which distinguishes one species of a genus from others of the same genus, e.g., "rational," a difference determining the genus "animal" to give the species "man," is a specific difference. (G).

DILEMMA. An argument which in its antecedent states an alternative in such wise that one or the other of its members being posed, the same conclusion follows. (G).

DISPENSATION. In Biblical usage, the Old and New Dispensation refers to what has been disposed and instituted by God in the Old and the New Covenants.

DISPOSITION. In a precise sense, a state of being, less stable than *habit*, and constituting with *habit* the first species of quality.

DISTINCTION. 1. A difference by which two objects of thought are separated or distinguished. 2. *Divisions*—*Real distinction*: one which actually exists in the thing itself, e.g., substance and accidents. *Distinction of reason*: one having actual existence only in the mind conceiving it; it may have a sound foundation (*rationis ratiocinatae*), e.g., the distinction between genus and species; or it may have no real foundation (*rationis ratiocinandis*), e.g., two words having the same meaning. (G).

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE. That which governs the relationship of the whole to its parts (in the social organism). Cf. Vol. IV, p. 338.

DIVINATION. A kind of superstition. Cf. Vol. IV, pp. 422-424.

DOCETISM. From the Greek verb meaning "to appear." The error of

those who refused to admit that Jesus Christ was a real man possessing a body of flesh and blood like ours. They considered the Gospel accounts of the human conception, birth, life, sufferings, death, and Resurrection of Christ as illusions or deceptive appearances.

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH. A title which the Church gives to certain saints and outstanding theologians.

DONATISM. Schism of Donatus (fourth century), vigorously combated by St. Augustine. Originally a disciplinary question, it was complicated by the anti-Romanism of the Christian Berbers of North Africa, and finally fell into errors on the nature of the Church and the sacraments.

DOXOLOGY. A formula of praise in honor of the Three Divine Persons.

DUALISM. Any doctrine which in a given domain, or on any question, whatever it may be, admits of two essentially irreducible principles. *Metaph.*—Doctrine that admits two irreducible first principles. (L).

DULIA. The worship given to the saints. That given to the Blessed Virgin Mary is called *hyperdulia*.

ECCLESIAL. Whatever concerns the Church understood principally as a community. This neologism represents an effort to "place" the juridical and social aspect of the Church, which is real and fundamental although secondary. This social aspect of the Church is at the service of the communitarian aspect.

ECCLESIASTIC. (Substantive) member of the clergy.

ECCLESIASTICAL. (Attribute) whatever concerns the Church.

ECLECTICISM. The method of those who try to find an explanation of different systems which will reduce them to a simple body of doctrine.

ECONOMY. Order in the running

of a house, or in managing an enterprise. *Economy of salvation*: God's plan for saving the world.

ECUMENICAL. From the Greek *Οἰκουμένη*, the whole of the inhabited portion of the earth; that which brings together or concerns all the Churches. *Ecumenical Council*—universal council. The Orthodox Churches have this in common with the Roman Church that they adhere to the dogmas defined by the first seven Ecumenical Councils: Nicea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), Constantinople (553), Constantinople (681), Nicea (786).

ECUMENISM. Movement of the separated Churches in favor of Unity.

EL, ELOHIM. *El* is the common name for God in Hebrew. *Elohim* is the plural form, but is often used as the plural of majesty for the one God. It also is used for inferior spirits, namely, the angels. The Hebrew names (Israel, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Joel, etc.) ending in *el* are theophoric names.

ELECTION. In the complexes of the human act, it designates the act by which the will chooses one of the means presented to it. (G). Cf. Vol. III, pp. 103 and 131.

ELICITED ACT. An interior and proper act of a power. Opposed to commanded act. For example, an elicited act of charity is an interior act of love; almsgiving is a commanded act of charity.

ELOHIST. One of the traditions of which the Pentateuch is composed. See YAHWIST, PRIESTLY CODE, DEUTERONOMIST.

EMANATION. According to some doctrines, a process by which the multiple beings making up the world flow (emanate) from one being which is the principle, there being no discontinuity in this proc-

ess. *Emanation* is opposed to *creation*. (L).

EMPIRICISM. An exclusive reliance on experience, using neither reasoning nor theory.

END. 1. That for the sake of which a thing is done. The end is in the nature of a cause, and is the principle of every causal process. 2. Divisions: The end insofar as it is realized (*in executione*) and insofar as it is the object desired (*in intentione*). The end to which the work is ordained by its very nature (*finis operis*) and the end pursued by the agent (*finis operantis*). The good desired (*finis cuius gratia*), and that for which the good is desired (*finis cui*). (G).

EPICLESIS. An invocation of the Holy Spirit in the Eastern rite.

"EPIKEIA". A virtue by which the just man, in order to fulfill the spirit of the law, exceeds the letter. Cf. Vol. IV, p. 471 and 483.

EPISCOPALIAN CHURCH. A Church sprung from Anglicanism, and found principally in the United States.

EPISTEMOLOGY. A critical study of the principles, hypotheses, and results of various sciences destined to determine their logical origin, their value, and their objective significance.

EQUIVOCAL. A property of a term applied to different objects with wholly different meanings, e.g., *dog*: animal or constellation. It is opposed to univocal and to analogical. (G).

EROS. The egotistic desire of the soul that seeks to possess something for its own sake.

ESCHATOLOGY. The science of the last or final things.

ESOTERIC. The secret teaching given only in the interior of a school in ancient Greece, and limited to completely instructed disciples. Metaphorically, it is applied to any

teaching reserved to a restricted circle of auditors. (L).

ESSENCE. That by which a thing is what it is, and is distinguished from other things. Together with existence, essence constitutes limited or contingent being. It corresponds to "second substance" which designates the intelligible content of substance. (G).

ESTIMATIVE. See **COGITATIVE**.

ETHICS. Moral science.

EUCHOLOGY. A prayer book. *Euchological*: concerned with prayer.

EUDAEMONISM. The moral doctrine based on the search for happiness. The morality of St. Thomas is a spiritual eudaemonism.

EUGENICS. A theory concerned with the means capable of exerting an influence on descent, that is, on the effects transmissible through heredity, and thus of producing an advantageous selection for future generations.

EULOGIA. Bread blessed at Mass. It would seem to have been intended originally for the sick and absent who were unable to communicate.

EUTHANASIA. The doctrine of those who hold that man has the right to make an end of his life, as gently as possible, by voluntary death, rather than endure the humiliations of old age.

EUTYCHIANISM. The doctrine of Eutyches (fifth century), condemned at the Council of Chalcedon. Cf. Vol. V, p. 29 ff.

EVANGELIZATION. The act of leading non-Christians to faith in Jesus Christ (see **KERYGMA**), and Christians to the perfection of the evangelical life.

EVOLUTIONISM. 1. A philosophy of becoming, opposed to the philosophy of the eternal and immutable. 2. Synonymous with transformation, according to which species are

derived from one another by natural transformation. (L).

EXCOMMUNICATION. A censure by which one is excluded from sacramental Communion and from association with the faithful.

EXEGESIS. From a Greek word meaning "to explain"; usually it refers to the explanation of the text of the Bible.

EXEMPLAR. The model according to which a thing is made. The *exemplary cause* may be considered as an extrinsic, formal cause. (G).

EXEMPTION. A privilege granted to persons or communities, withdrawing them from ordinary episcopal authority and placing them in direct dependence upon the Pope.

EXISTENCE (*esse, existentia*). The ultimate act of being which brings it into effective existence. Existence enters into real composition with essence in created things. (G).

EXISTENTIALISM. A philosophy which gives primacy to existence, "value" (quality), life, becoming. (By way of opposition one might mention *essentialism*: a philosophy based on the definition and stability of essences or "natures.")

EXORCISM. The act of expelling the devil from a person, object, or place. *Exorcist*: 1. One who expels devils. 2. The third of the minor orders in the Latin Church.

EXTENSION. The totality of the subjects to which a concept refers. It is opposed to comprehension. (G).

FATHERS OF THE CHURCH. The bishops and great theologians of the early Church from the beginning to the fall of the Roman Empire in the West (476). In the broad sense, it extends up to the medieval period. *Apostolic Fathers*: those who lived at the time of the Apostles.

FEAR OF GOD. In Hebrew, the term rendered by this word refers to the religious duties of obedience and re-

spect. To fear God is to venerate, respect, and adore Him with that particular attribute that theology expresses as filial fear. (B.F.).

FETISHISM. The worship of fetishes, small, material objects regarded as the incarnation or at least the representation of a spirit, and in consequence possessing magical power. (L).

FIDEISM. An error according to which certain truths of the faith that can also be known by natural means are said to be known only through faith. Those clinging to this error refuse to try to attain any understanding of the things of faith, claiming that it is impossible.

FORM. In general, the determinative principle of a thing. Phys.: one of the three principles of physical being, along with matter and privation. Divisions—*Substantial Form*: one which constitutes a given nature by determining prime matter. *Accidental Form*: The subsequent determination of an already essentially constituted being. Metaph.: By extension, every determination of being, even though not received in matter, e.g., angels, separated forms. Metaph.: *Form* together with *figure* makes up the fourth species of quality. *Formal*: that which is according to form. The formal aspect of a thing or concept always has reference to the determinate or actual. *Formal object*: the definite, precise aspect attained by a power or *habitus*. It is opposed to *material object*. *Sacramental Form*: the words which give meaning and ultimate determination to each sacrament.

FREE WILL. 1. Fundamentally, free will indicates the power of the will together with the intellect to choose one thing rather than another. 2. Derivatively, the term free will may be extended to the very act of choice or election. This is an act

of the will but always supposes an intellectual judgment. This intimate association of the specifying action of the intellect and the exercise of the will is characteristic of St. Thomas' doctrine of liberty. In his view, free choice is an *appetitus intellectivus*. The free act is opposed to the act resulting from a necessary inclination. (G).

GALLICANISM. The complexus of doctrines, practices, and tendencies aiming at the liberty of the Church in France and its greatest possible autonomy in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. It is opposed to Ultramontaniam.

GENERATION. A substantial change culminating in the formation of a new substance. (G).

GENUS. A universal which may be attributed to its subjects as an incomplete expression of their essence: e.g., "animal." One of the five predicables. *Generic*: that which pertains to the comprehension of a genus as opposed to what might pertain to this or that species (*specific*).

GLOSS. A Patristic explanation and interpretation of Scripture.

GLOSSOLALIA. The gift of tongues. Cf. I Cor. 14:4-5, etc.

GNOSIS. An esoteric system of religious knowledge "superior to faith" and practically replacing it with a philosophical dualism. See Vol. I, pp. 150-152.

GOOD. 1. Being insofar as it is capable of fulfilling a desire or insofar as it is perfect. Everything desires the good. Along with the one, and the true, the good is one of the transcendental properties of being. 2. Divisions—*Moral good*: that which is sought for itself or on account of its intrinsic worth. *Useful good*: that which is sought as a means or in view of another. *Delectable good*: the pleasure attached to the obtaining of a good. (G).

"HABITUS." 1. Metaph.: To have—the fact of a subject's possessing something of its own; e.g., an article of clothing. *Habitus* is the tenth of the Aristotelian categories. 2. Psycho., Mor.: that by which a subject is well or poorly disposed with regard to its form or its end. Together with *disposition*, *habitus* constitutes the first species of quality. Divisions—*entitative habit*, related to being, e.g., grace. *Operative habit*, the most common, immediately disposing a subject to act: e.g., the virtues. It should be noted that the term *habit* used in common parlance designates behavior rather than an act and seems to necessarily imply automatism and repetition, thus having a more limited meaning. Cf. Vol. III, pp. 180-182 and 221.

HAGIOGRAPHY. Biographies of the saints.

HAPAX. From a Greek word meaning "once." A word that occurs only once in the Bible.

HEART. Understood as the principle of life, symbolically designating the spiritual principle of being and in particular of love. The Hebrews considered the heart to be the seat of the understanding, and the "bowels" the seat of love.

HEDONISM. Every doctrine which takes as the sole moral principle the intensification of pleasure and avoidance of pain.

HERMENEUTICS. Interpretation of philosophical or religious writings, especially Biblical writings (*Sacred Hermeneutics*). The word is especially used of the interpretation of symbols. (L).

HERMETICS. The complex of doctrines believed to have their origins in Egyptian books.

HIERARCHY. In the Church, the hierarchy consists of the totality of the organs of the magisterium, government, and priesthood.

HOLOCAUST. From a Hebrew word which means "to ascend"; the offering by which the victim goes up to the altar, to be there entirely consumed by fire.

HOLY. Attribute proper to God and to persons and things that belong to Him or are consecrated to Him. Every baptized person is "holy."

HOMILY. A familiar discourse on the Gospel. A portion of a "homily" of the Fathers in the Breviary.

"HOMO-OUSIOS." See CONSUBSTANTIALITY.

HYLOMORPHISM. A physical doctrine characteristic of Aristotelian cosmology, and according to which the ultimate principles of bodies are their matter and form. It is distinguished notably from *atomism*. (G).

HYPERDULIA. See DULIA.

HYPOSTASIS. An individual substance that is complete, perfect, and self-subsistent. Synonymous with *supposit* and *person*, namely, an intelligent substance.

HYPOSTATIC. Union of the divine nature and the human nature of Jesus in the single hypostasis (or person) of the Word.

ICONOCLASTS (image-breakers) and ICONOMACHISTS (image-haters). Partisans in the struggle against the holy images begun officially in 725 A.D. by Leo III the Isaurian, and continued by several of his successors until 842.

IDEALISM. A philosophical tendency which consists in reducing all existence to thought. It is opposed to realism, which admits that things may exist independently of thought.

IDIO. In theology, a natural property. *Law of communication of idioms*. In Christology, the law governing the manner in which human and divine names can or cannot be attributed to Christ. Cf. Vol. V, p. 84 ff.

IDOL. In the beginning, a shade or spirit. An object in which a spirit is believed to dwell or act, and which is venerated superstitiously. A statue, or any object which is venerated as a god or goddess.

IMMANENT. That which remains in the subject. *Immanent action* is that which terminates in the acting subject, and which perfects the subject. Immanence is the proper characteristic of vital action. It is opposed to *transitive action*, which terminates in another, and perfects it. (G).

IMMEDIATE. Opposed to mediate. Said of all relations or actions in which the two terms concerned are connected without the interposition of a third term or intermediary. (L).

IMMENSITY (Presence of). The term used to describe the fact of God's presence in all things, all places, and all beings.

"IMPERIUM." The stage of the human act which moves to execution. Cf. Vol. III, pp. 104-105 and 132.

INDIVIDUAL. 1. (Log.). The ultimate subject which can in no wise be attributed to another. The species is made up of individuals. 2. (Metaph.). In the sense of *supposit*: being insofar as it is endowed with proper and incommunicable subsistence. (G).

INDUCTION. In a general way, the process of reasoning by which one ascends from the particular to the universal. (G).

INDULGENCE. Remission of a penalty or punishment.

INDWELLING (Divine). The presence of the Divine Persons in the soul in the state of grace. Cf. Vol. II, pp. 171-172.

INERRANCY (of the Bible). A property of the Biblical text which excludes error and even the possibility of error.

INFALLIBILITY. Impossibility of being in error. Infallibility belongs to

the Church (1870), and was extended by the Vatican Council to the Pope when he speaks *ex cathedra*. See CATHEDRA.

INSPIRATION (of Scripture). The action exercised by the Holy Spirit on the sacred writers to bring them to write, with his Help and under His direct influence, the truths that He wanted to manifest to men.

INSTRUMENTAL CAUSE. Cause acting in virtue of its own form, but as moved by another (principal) cause. (G).

INTEGRALISM. A conservative attitude of mind, involving a clinging to old ideas and a refusal to understand new ones in the face of the modernist crisis (see MODERNISM). In their legitimate concern to defend the integrity and the heritage of faith, "integralists" have blindly held on to certain formulas rather than sought to understand them and to answer new questions.

INTELLECT (*intellectus, intelligentia*). 1. Most often used to designate the spiritual faculty of knowing. 2. Divisions—*Agent intellect*: the faculty which abstracts the intelligible from images. *Passive or possible intellect*: the faculty receiving abstracted likenesses. 3. *Intellectus* is also one of the five intellectual *habitus*, namely, the one that perfects the faculty in its grasp of first principles. This *habitus* can be either speculative (the speculative intellect knows in order to know, that is, to grasp the truth), or practical (the practical intellect knows in order to act). *Intellection*: The very act by which the intellect apprehends its object, or knows. It is distinguished from *diction*, the formative act of the mental word in which the object is known. *Intelligible*: what can be immediately grasped by the intellect. In Aristotelianism, intelligibility is a function of immateriality. (G).

INTENTION. 1. (Mor.). The orientation of a tendency, especially of the will, towards its end. 2. (Psycho.). The concept insofar as it is ordered to represent an exterior thing. 3. (Log.). *Second intention* (as opposed to first intention): the concept insofar as it is a logical being (being of reason) or is implicated in the life of the mind. 4. *Intentional order*: the order of the representation of objects insofar as they are thoughts. (G).

INTUITION (*intuitus, perceptio*). Usually designates the experimental grasp of a concrete object. It is opposed to *conception* which corresponds rather to the abstract notion of knowledge or the formation of concepts. (G).

IRASCIBLE. One of the two faculties of sensible appetite. Has for its object the good difficult to obtain or evil difficult to avoid. It is opposed to *concupiscible*. Cf. Vol. III, pp. 172-173. (G).

IRENICISM. An attitude of mind which tolerates in peace grave errors which cannot be accepted.

JANSENISM. Heresy of Jansenius who, by an overly narrow conception of grace and predestination, mutilated man's free nature.

JUDGMENT. General sense: the act of the intellect corresponding to the second operation of the mind. 1. In St. Thomas, *judicium* in the strict sense does not apply to any judgment indiscriminately, but to one that determines a deliberation from a higher point of view or in the light of wisdom: e.g., the act of a judge. 2. The second operation of the mind in its widest extent is generally expressed in St. Thomas by the phrase *compositio vel divisio*: it is that act of the intellect which composes and divides by affirmation and denial. (G).

JUST MAN. That man who is at peace with God; the perfect man.

JUSTIFICATION. The act by which God moves a soul from the state of sin to the state of justice or grace. The same word is applied to the state of one justified or rendered just by God's action. Today the term *sanctification* (a synonym) is preferred.

KENOSIS. An allusion to Phil. 2:7, *ἐκένωσεν*. The kenosis of the Word is His Incarnation. It sometimes designates a heretical doctrine, according to which the Incarnation would be understood to result in a limitation of the divine.

KERYGMA. From κήρυξ—"herald"—one who announces or proclaims good news. In theology, the kerygma is the first proclamation of the Good News (Gospel) made by the herald of Christ (the missionary), to bring unbelievers to conversion and Baptism. The first step in evangelization.

LATRIA. The worship due to God alone. Idolatry is sinful in that it renders to idols (i.e., to "shadows") worship that is due only to God.

LECTOR. A cleric charged with reading the lessons. The second of the minor orders in the Latin Church.

LIBATION. A sacrificial effusion of wine or other liquid in honor of the divinity. See Gen. 35:14.

LIFE. 1. Spontaneous and immanent activity that is characteristic of living beings. The principle of life is the soul. 2. Divisions—There are three degrees of life: the vegetative, the sensory, and the intellectual. 3. *Human life*. Two modes, depending on whether the intellect is practical (active life) or speculative (contemplative life). Cf. Vol. III, p. 656 ff., pp. 733-734.

"LOGION." A saying of Christ transcribed by the Evangelists.

LOGIC. The science of correct

thinking, judgment, and reasoning.

"Logos." A Greek word meaning "word" or "reason." St. John identifies Christ as the uncreated *Logos* of God. (Synonym of Word).

MAGIC. In the beginning, the astral religion of the Magians and Chaldeans. Today the term applied to the superstitious practice which attributes to gestures, words, or things a natural or supernatural effect out of proportion to their real causality.

MAGISTERIUM. The official teaching organ in the Church. See Vol. I, pp. 18-20.

MALTHUSIANISM. The doctrine of Malthus, an Anglican pastor and economist (1766-1834), who advocated the limitation of births as a means of avoiding overpopulation.

MANICHEANISM. A religious sect established in the third century by Mani, who believed in two equal and fundamental principles, one good and one evil.

MARTYR. From a Greek word meaning "witness." Originally had the same meaning as *Confessor* of the faith. It came to be used only for those who bore witness to their faith by shedding their blood for it.

MATERIALISM. 1. (Ontology). A doctrine according to which nothing exists but matter, to which conscious properties are attributed according to the different forms of materialism. 2. (Psycho.). A doctrine which considers any activity or state of consciousness as a secondary phenomenon whose only explanation as a scientific fact lies in its relationship to its corresponding physiological phenomena. Ethics: a practical doctrine which considers health, well-being, wealth, and pleasure as the fundamental interests of life. (L.).

MATTER. 1. One of the immanent principles of things. Matter and form are intrinsic principles of

physical being. 2. Divisions—*Prime Matter*: the first and absolutely indeterminate subject which, together with substantial form, constitutes the substance of bodies. *Second Matter*: the subject of determination or accidental forms of corporeal substances. 3. *Intelligible, Sensible, Individual Matter*: matter insofar as it is considered more or less abstracted by the mind. (G.).

MEDIATE. See IMMEDIATE.

"MENS." The human soul in its spiritual role as the principle of the higher operations of intellection and volition.

MERIT. That which makes a person or action worthy of reward, praise, or esteem. In the theology of grace, we distinguish merit *de congruo*, which is one of simple fitness, taking into consideration the free state of the meriting subject; and merit *de condigno*, or merit in justice and dignity, which considers the divine origin of the act done. See Vol. III, pp. 398-409.

"METANOIA." Conversion and penance. See Vol. VI, p. 223.

METAPHYSICS. The highest division of philosophy, which deals with the final explanations and ultimate principles of things. It is the science of being as such and of the attributes of being as being. (G.).

METEMPSYCHOSIS. A doctrine according to which one and the same soul may successively animate several bodies either human, animal, or vegetable. (L.).

MIDRASH. A rabbinical commentary on Holy Scripture. It is made up of the Halacha (legislation) and the Haggada.

MIRACLE. A fact brought about by a special intervention of God outside the material order of causes established by Him, and destined to a spiritual end. Cf. Vol. II, pp. 417-418, and Vol. III, pp. 11-17.

MISHNA. A collection of juridical decisions of the Jews up to the third century A.D.

MISSION. 1. *Divine Missions:* The temporal terms of the divine processions. The Son who proceeds from the Father is said to be sent (from the Latin *missus*) to the soul when the latter establishes a new relationship with the Son. Cf. Vol. II, pp. 170-172 and Vol. III, p. 361. We distinguish the visible missions (the Incarnation, the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles) and the invisible missions. 2. *Mission of the Church:* a) The totality of the magisterial functions for the sanctification and government of the Church. b) The special work of the Church among non-Christians. See **EVANGELIZATION**.

MOBILE. That which is moved. The "mobile" is the subject of movement, the "mover" is the cause of it. See **MOVER**.

MODALISM. See **MONARCHIANISM**.

MODE. (Metaph.). Everything that determines or modifies a being.

MODERNISM. Collective term designating the religious crisis of an immoderate progressivism that elicited several important acts on the part of Pope Pius X (the Decree *Lamentabili*, and the Encyclical *Pascendi*, 1907). In opposition to the Modernist error, another excess has arisen, known as *integralism*. See **INTEGRALISM**.

MONAD. Simple and indivisible substance.

MONARCHIANISM. Heresy of the third century which sought to safeguard the unity of God by denying the Trinity of the Divine Persons, and considered the Son and the Holy Spirit to be *modes* of the Father. Cf. Vol. II, p. 144.

MONOPHYSITISM. From two Greek words which mean: "a single nature." Historically, the name of

"Monophysites" was given to all who rejected the conclusions of the Council of Chalcedon.

MONTANISM. Heresy of Montanus (circa 172). He announced the incarnation of the Holy Spirit and the Second Coming.

MORALITY. 1. Moral state of a society or of an individual. 2. Science concerned with morals. 3. (Theol.). That part of theology whose purpose is to lead man back to God.

MOTU PROPRIO. Papal Bull, so-called because the Pope delivers it of his own initiative. It is not sealed, but only signed by the Pope.

MOVEMENT. 1. (Metaph.). The act of that which is in potency toward something else. 2. Divisions—For Aristotle, in addition to substantial change, there are three sorts of movement in the strict sense of the word: local movement, qualitative alteration, and quantitative change (increase or decrease). (G).

MOVER. 1. The active principle of movement. Is opposed to the moved, which designates the subject of movement. 2. *Prime Mover:* in Aristotelianism, the supreme principle of physical movement, namely, pure act or God. (G).

MYSTERY. According to St. Paul, God's plan for our salvation, which was formerly hidden from us and has now been revealed to us in Jesus Christ. In a second sense, it applies to the signs in which God's plan is manifested to us. (See **SACRAMENTS**.) The word "mystery" is sometimes understood to mean a truth that reason cannot discover by itself; this sense is insufficient in theology, which does not separate reality (or truth) from the sign by which we know it.

MYSTICISM. The Christian experience of God, that is, experience through the signs or mysteries which have been given to us of Him.

MYSTICAL BODY. Originally, the term was used to designate both the Eucharistic Body of Christ and the community of the faithful united by the celebration of the Eucharistic mystery. At present, it designates only the communion of all Christians in Christ, abstracting from the sacramental sign (mystery).

MYSTAGOGY. Initiation into mysteries.

MYTH. Social or religious tradition which, under the figure of an allegory, reports a natural, historical, or philosophical fact, or a religious truth.

NATURALISM. Doctrine which holds that nothing exists outside of Nature, that is to say, nothing exists outside the concatenation of facts similar to those which we know from experience.

NATURE. 1. (Phys.). In a physical being, the intrinsic principle of its movement and rest (e.g., the nature of man). As a principle of operation, nature is distinct from art, an extrinsic principle of the rational order. 2. By extension, nature designates the totality of physical beings. 3. The term nature is likewise transposed to signify the essence of a being, even one that is purely spiritual. From the point of view of intelligible content, nature corresponds to form and to essence. (G).

NECESSARY. See **CONTINGENT**.

NEOPHYTE. Convert, newly admitted into the Church.

NESTORIANISM. The heresy of Nestorius, who distinguished two hypostases in Christ. Condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431.

NIHILISM. Doctrine according to which no absolute exists.

NOMINALISM. Doctrine according to which no general ideas exist, but only general signs. Historically, the philosophical nominalism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries

prepared the way for certain errors of the Reformation. *Nominalistic*: general term under which all contemporary doctrines are classified which substitute the ideas of convention, convenience, and empirical success to those of truth and the knowledge of the real, in the domain of scientific theory. (L).

NOTIONS. In Trinitarian theology, the notions of the Persons are the marks or distinctive notes that give a specific idea of each divine Person. There are five notions in God: innascibility, fatherhood (both relating to the Father), sonship (relating to the Son), common spiration (Father and Son), and procession (Holy Spirit). *Notional act*: active origin or productive act of a divine Person. There are two such acts: generation (act of the Father), spiration (common act of the Father and the Son).

NOUN. A noun is a word used in a non-temporal way to signify a person or thing. The noun and the verb (which always connotes time) are the necessary elements of enunciation.

NUMBER. One of the species of quantity. Is defined as a multitude measured by unity. Numerical multitude and unity are to be distinguished from transcendental multitude and unity.

OBEDIENTIAL POTENCY. Designates the aptitude of a created nature to receive a determination which surpasses its natural capacities. Creatures are always in obediential potency in relation to God, the supreme agent.

OBJECT. 1. That which is directly attained by a power and that determines it. 2. Divisions—*Formal object*: the aspect of things that is directly perceived. *Material object*: the thing attained considered in its total reality. Example: The formal

object of faith is the revealed first truth; the material object of faith is the proposition of faith (articles of the Creed).

OBSCURANTISM. Pejorative term serving to designate a doctrine or a political view opposed to progress.

OMNIPOTENCE. **OMNIPRESENCE.** **OMNISCIENCE.** Attributes of the God-head, who is at once all-powerful, present in every place, and from whom nothing is hidden.

ONE. 1. *Transcendental one*: That which is undivided in itself; one of the transcendental properties of being. 2. *Predicamental one*: one as the principle and measure of number. One is opposed to the many. (G).

ONTOLOGY. Science of being as being.

"OPERE OPERATO." Example: That act is efficacious *ex opere operato* which produces its effect by itself. That act is efficacious *ex opere operantis* which produces its effect by virtue of the one who performs it.

ORDO. Book giving the order of liturgical ceremonies for each year.

ORTHODOXY. Doctrine in conformity with faith. *Orthodox Church*: title of the schismatic Eastern Church. See Vol. I, p. 112. *Feast of Orthodoxy*: Feast which celebrates the triumph of Orthodoxy at the end of the Iconoclast quarrel. Inaugurated by the Empress Theodora in 842 (First Sunday in Lent).

PANTHEISM. Doctrine according to which everything is God: God and the world are one.

PARABLE. Account which in its general elements calls to mind realities of a superior order.

"PAROUSIA." Etymologically, "presence," "coming," "arrival." In New Testament terminology and in theology, signifies the glorious return of Christ at the end of the world.

PARTICIPATION. The fact of taking

part in a form. There are two great species of participation: participation *by composition*, by which a subject receives a form which subsists by itself in its principle; participation *by similitude*, by which a form is only imperfectly what another form, upon which the former depends, is in plenitude. (G).

PASSION. 1. (Metaph.). The fact of being modified or of undergoing a transformation. Passion is one of the ten predicaments. 2. (Mor.). The passions designate especially the various modifications of the sensible appetite. See Vol. III, p. 141 ff., and the list on pp. 172-173. (Christol.). The mystery of the sufferings and death of Christ.

PASTORAL. (Theol.). 1. In a general sense, *pastoral theology* is not distinct from *theology* (all theology is useful and necessary for the pastoral function). 2. In a limited sense, *pastoral theology* designates that part of theology that studies the totality of the mystery of the Church militant, to set forth and apply the laws of its growth.

PEDOBAPTISM. Doctrine and practice favorable to the Baptism of children.

PELAGIANISM. Heresy of Pelagius (fourth-fifth centuries) that denied original sin and attributed to the purely natural powers of the human soul powers that it can possess only through grace. See Vol. III, pp. 354-356.

PENANCE. 1. Conversion or turning about of the sinner. 2. Virtue of penance: disposition of the heart to flee sin and to hate it in order to preserve God's friendship. 3. In a secondary sense, penance designates an act commanded by the virtue of penance; thus, a person is said to *do penance*, one speaks of works of *penance*, and sacramental satisfaction is called *penance*. 4. Season of

penance. Season when the Church invites the faithful to be converted and to do penance.

PENTATEUCH. Name given to the first five books of the Bible.

PERICOPÉ. Passage or excerpt from the Bible, forming a complete whole in itself.

PERIPATETICISM. (Phil.). Aristotle's philosophy.

PERSON (*persona*, *hypostasis*). Individual, rational, and autonomous substance; the "supposit" of the rational being. (G).

PHANTASMS. Term habitually used by St. Thomas to designate interior images, especially insofar as they are the point of departure of intellectual abstraction. (G).

PHENOMENOLOGY. Descriptive study of a group of phenomena as they are manifested in time or space. (L).

PHYSICAL. From the Greek word meaning "nature." Theol.—The *physical cause*, i.e., the real and direct cause, is distinguished from the *occasional* or *moral cause*. Example: The sacraments are physical, and not merely moral or occasional causes of grace.

PLEROMA. Plenitude, consummation. The Church is the *Pleroma* of Christ (Eph. 1:23).

PNEUMATIC. From πνεῦμα, "breath," "spirit," and in the New Testament the proper name of the Third Divine Person. In contrast to the word "spiritual," which signifies only that which is related to spirit, the neologism "pneumatic" always implies a relationship to the Holy Spirit. *Pneumatology*: theology of the Holy Spirit.

POLYGENISM. Theory according to which several human couples would be the originators of the human race. It is banned from theological teaching by the Encyclical *Humani generis*.

PORTER. The first of the minor orders of the Latin Church.

PORTICO. (Phil.). Philosophy of the Stoics.

POTENCY. 1. Any capacity for change or for being determined. In relationship to act, it is that which can be, and is not, in act. 2. Principal aspects: *active potency*, or potency for change in another insofar as it is "other." *Passive potency*, or potency to be transformed by another, as "other." *Natural potency*, that which belongs to things by reason of their nature. See also OBE-DIENTIAL POTENCY. 3. Potency and act are the primary divisions of real being. (G).

POTENTIALITY. Quality of that which is in potency.

PRAGMATISM. Doctrine according to which truth is entirely relative to human experience.

PREDESTINATION. God's plan for the elect.

PREDICABLES. (Log.). Various sorts of universal concepts distinguished according to the manner in which they are related to their inferiors and can be attributed to them. There are five predicables: genus, species, difference, property, and accident.

PREDICAMENTAL ACCIDENT. That which exists in another as in a subject. Examples: color, size. Is opposed to substance. The nine accidents, together with substance, make up the ten categories. (G).

PREDICAMENTS. Synonym for the categories.

PREDICATE. See ATTRIBUTE.

PREMISES. The combination of the two first propositions of a syllogism. These two propositions constitute the antecedent from which the consequent results. (G).

PREMOTION (physical). In the theology of grace, the divine motion received by a spiritual creature to

induce it to act freely and vitally.

PRESBYTERATE. Order given to priests by ordination.

PRESBYTERIAN Church. Church founded by Knox in Scotland. It does not recognize episcopal authority, but only that of ministers.

PRESBYTERIUM. Ancient name of the college of priests who surrounded the bishop.

PRETERNATURAL. Phenomenon or cause which exceeds the power of nature, but which is not formally of the supernatural order.

PRIEST. From a Greek word that means "ancient"; he who presides, together with the bishop, but in second place, over the assembly of Christians, and who is officially charged with preserving and communicating the living deposit of faith and the sacraments of faith. *Priestly powers:* Special powers that the priest has received in view of his duties.

PRIESTHOOD. 1. State of the one who gives out sacred things. Christians recognize only one priesthood, that of Christ, which is shared sacramentally in two degrees, in two ways, and according to two different powers: a) by baptized Christians; b) by priests. 2. *Priestly Code.* One of the traditions which make up the Pentateuch. Cf. YAHWIST, ELOHIST, DEUTERONOMIST.

PRINCIPLE. That from a thing is produced or known. Principle is a more general term than cause, which implies, in addition, a real dependence upon being. (G).

PROBABILISM. Theory of moralists who admit a probable opinion, as such, as a legitimate rule of conduct, even though a more probable recognized opinion is common on the debated point (Probabiliorism).

PROCESSION (divine). Procession designates the derivation of a term, starting from its principle. Heat

proceeds from the sun, an operation proceeds from the agent, a product from the artisan, the begotten from the begetter, gray from white and black, etc. In short, there are two processions (or two orders of origins): the generation of the Son, the spiration of the Spirit. In a special sense, the name of procession is sometimes given to the only procession in the Trinity that is not generation, namely, that which starts with the Father and the Son and terminates in the Holy Spirit. The vague and generic word "procession" is particularly adapted to this second procession, whose mysteriousness is beyond our grasp.

PROFESSION. 1. *Profession of faith:* Public declaration of faith. 2. *Religious profession.* Act by which a novice enters the religious life (pronouncement of vows). The religious thus pledged is said to be *professed*. Divisions—simple profession: with simple, temporary or perpetual vows; solemn profession: with solemn vows that are always perpetual. Temporary profession: with temporary vows that are always simple; perpetual profession: with perpetual vows, whether simple or solemn.

PROPERTY. (Metaph.). That which necessarily follows from the essence of a thing. The "mark" that signifies the characteristic property of a given essence is one of the five predicables. In Trinitarian theology, the property of a Person is that by which it is distinguished from another. The Three Divine Persons are distinguished by four properties: Fatherhood and innascibility (the Father), Sonship (the Son), common spiration (the Holy Spirit).

PROPHETS. Men chosen by God to carry His message.

PROPORTIONALITY. See ANALOGY.

PROSELYTES. Those who, not being of Jewish origin, have embraced

the Jewish religion, accepted circumcision and the observances, and have thus become members of the chosen people. *Proselytism*: action by which one tries to gain new converts.

PROTESTANT. Since the sixteenth century, name reserved exclusively for Lutherans and all those who "protested" against Rome either at the same time or afterward.

PROTOCANONICAL (Books). Books of the Bible that have always been recognized by the Church as inspired. Is opposed to **DEUTEROCANONICAL**.

PRUDENCE. Moral virtue of discernment, judgment, and action. First of the cardinal virtues. Cf. Vol. III, pp. 210 to 249.

PSYCHOANALYSIS. Analysis of the various elements of temperament, character, and all that constitutes unconscious or subconscious "complexes," with a view to giving the patient a liberating knowledge of himself.

PURITANISM. Sect of strict Presbyterians, narrowly attached to the letter of Scripture, and who were persecuted by the Stuarts. Whence, attitude of mind of a person who affects great rigidity of principles.

QUADRIVIVUM. In the Middle Ages, the advanced division of university studies at the "Faculty of Arts"; the division included arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. (L).

QUALITY. 1. Accident that intrinsically modifies or disposes a substance in itself. It is one of the ten categories. 2. There are four kinds of quality: disposition and "habitus"; potency and impotency; the "passible" qualities; figure and form. (G).

QUANTITY. 1. Accident consisting essentially in the internal divisibility and extensibility of the parts of a body. 2. Divisions: *continuous* or

concrete quantity; *discontinuous* or *discrete* quantity, i.e., number.

"QUIDDITAS." Sometimes translated by "quiddity." Literally, that which answers the question *quid sit*, what is it? "Quiddity" expresses the essence or definition of a thing. (G).

QUIETISM. Historically, the error of Molinos and Mme. Guyon (seventeenth century). In a general way, any system that tends to suppress normal effort and to incline to rest (*quies*), supposedly in favor of divine activity.

"QUOD" and "QUO." Two principles (or two objects or two terms) of being and knowing. *Quod*: "That which," as the subject or term to which a given property is attributed, or the object that one knows. *Quo*: "That by which" the subject is capable of attributions, or "in the light of which" it is considered. Examples: Object *quod* of faith: a given truth that relates to God. Object *quo* of faith: the quality of being revealed, in the light of which a given truth is considered. Object *quod* of sight: that which is seen by the eye; object *quo*: the color through which the eye makes contact with beings. Among the three principles in all created beings, the supposit is the principle *quod* of being (that which exists); existence (that by which the subject exists), and nature (that by which its existence is defined) are both principles *quo* in different ways. In the proposition "the just man lives by faith," the man who possesses the quality of justness is the term *quod* that is considered; the quality of justice by which he is considered is the term *quo*.

RATIONALISM. Attitude of mind according to which one tries to explain everything by reason and to depend on it alone.

REASON. 1. (Psycho.) The intel-

lect considered in its discursive function: is opposed to *intellectus*, the intellect considered especially as an intuitive power. 2. *Being of reason*: that which as such can exist only in the mind. Is opposed to real being. 3. "Ratio" (in the sense in which it is used in expressions such as "*ratio entis*," "*ratio veri*," etc.) designates a formal or objective principle of a thing, but inasmuch as it explains or proves this thing. The term "reason" renders the meaning of the Latin expression very imperfectly. 4. *Principle of Sufficient reason*: one of the supreme laws of thought. (G).

REFORM. Change wrought in the Church for the purpose of improving conditions. For example, the Reform of Cîteaux, the "holy reformers" of Carmel: St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Ávila. Outside the Catholic Church, the Reform (or Reformation) designates the act of rupture with the Roman Church and the foundation of dissident and heretical Churches in the sixteenth century. *Reformed*. Title reserved for Calvinists. Most of the Protestants of France are Reformed, whereas those of Scandinavia and Germany are Lutherans.

REGULAR. In the theology of the religious state, anyone who is subject to a rule. In canon law, a religious with solemn vows.

RELATION. In a general way, the relationship of one thing with another. Divisions—*transcendental relation*: the essential order of one thing to another, e.g., the ordering of the intellect to the true. *Predicamental relation*: an "accident" whose reality consists entirely in being related to another, e.g., the relationship of similitude. The predicamental relation is one of the ten categories (or predicaments). *Real relation and relation of reason*: See REASON (2). Trinitarian Theology.

There are four *real relations* in God: Fatherhood (Father to Son), Sonship (Son to Father), common spiration (Father and Son to Holy Spirit), passive procession (Spirit to Father and Son). While God is pure unity, the Divine Reality presents itself to our perception by means of absolute indivisibility and by means of distinct relations (divinely revealed to man).

SABELLIANISM. Heresy of Sabellius, (third century) for whom the Divine Persons are only aspects of God.

SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER. Permanent spiritual mark impressed upon the soul by certain sacraments, and communicating certain powers relating to Christian worship. There are three sacraments that impress a distinct sacramental character proper to each: Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

SACRIFICE. Ritual act by which a being is made sacred.

SANCTIFICATION. See JUSTIFICATION.

SANCTITY. Spiritual and moral quality of those who have attained to perfection. In the procedure of canonizations, the recognition of sanctity terminates the process. Thus those who were formerly called "blessed" in heaven have now come to be called "saints."

SATISFACTION. Action by which reparation is made for an offense. The Passion of Christ has a value of universal satisfaction. The sacrament of Penance involves the making of satisfaction.

SCHISM. Sin against the unity of the Church.

SCHOLASTIC. That which belongs to the "School," that is, to the philosophical teaching given in the ecclesiastical schools and universities of Europe from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries. (L).

SCIENCE. In the strict sense, ac-

cording to scholastic philosophy, it signifies knowledge through causes. Subjectively, science is one of the five speculative *habitus*. 2. Divisions—*speculative sciences*: those that have no other end than knowledge; *practical sciences*: those that are ordered to action. (G).

SCRUTINIES. In ancient times, the assembling of catechumens on certain days, for exorcisms, instructions, prayers, and benedictions.

SENSES. 1. Powers of knowing whose act is sensation and that make use of a corporeal organ. 2. Divisions—The five external senses; the four internal senses: "common sense," imagination, memory, the cogitative faculty. (G).

SENSIBLE. The object of the sensible powers. The following distinctions are made: the *proper object*, which is attained immediately and in itself (color, for sight); the *common object*, which is attained by several senses (size); the *accidental object*, which is attained only indirectly through the intermediary of the proper object (man, through sight). (G).

SENSUALITY. 1. Susceptibility to sexuality. In this sense, it is a fact of nature, and belongs to every human being, even to Adam before his sin. 2. Inordinate sexual appetite. In this latter sense, it is a sin and consists in an undue attachment to sexual pleasures.

SEPTUAGINT. The first Greek translation of the Old Testament in Hebrew, made in Alexandria, beginning about the third century before Christ, by about seventy translators.

SIGN. That which manifests a thing. Divisions—*natural sign*, based on a natural relationship between the sign and the thing signified; *conventional sign*, whose relationship to the thing signified results from arbitrary choice. (G).

SOBORNOST. Term which design-

nates the Eastern conception of the Church, a community of faith in the Holy Spirit, which is in its entirety an infallible organ of truth. Within it, all "Churches" are equal.

SOTERIOLOGY. Science that studies questions relating to the salvation of man.

SOUL. 1. The first immaterial principle of life. In a living being, the soul, according to Aristotle, is the form of the body. 2. A distinction should be made between the *vegetative soul*, the principle of plant life; the *sensitive soul*, the principle of animal life; and the *rational soul*, principle of the rational or spiritual life, which is proper to man and exercises within him the functions of the two inferior souls whose place it takes. (G).

SPECIES. (Log.). Universal that can be attributed to its inferiors by expressing their essence in a complete way. For example, "man." Species constitutes one of the five predicables. (G).

SPECULATIVE. See INTELLECT.

"SPHRAGIS." Seal with which, in ancient times, masters marked the persons and animals that belonged to them. In the baptismal rite, the Fathers use this word to designate the imposition of the sign of the Cross and the character.

SPIRATION. Active: act by which the Father and the Son are the origin of the Holy Spirit. Passive: term of active spiration.

SPIRITISM. Doctrine of those who are alleged to have the faculty of making contact with spirits.

STOICISM. Philosophical doctrine of Zeno, who is best known for his morality of effort that was indifferent to suffering.

SUBDEACON. The first of the major orders in the Latin Church. A minor order in the Eastern Church.

SUBJECT. 1. (Log.). That about which something is affirmed or de-

nied in a proposition. Is opposed to *predicate*. 2. In a science, that thing whose properties are determined. Example: number, the subject of arithmetic. 3. (Psycho.). He who knows, in opposition to what is known, or to the object. 4. Metaph. In a general way, that which receives a form. From this point of view, matter is a subject. (G).

SUBLIMATION. Chemical action by which a body is transformed from the solid to the gaseous state. Figuratively, the term has taken on various indistinct meanings.

SUBSISTENCE. Substantial mode which terminates the individual essence and makes it incommunicable. According to the principal commentators of St. Thomas, subsistence is really distinct from essence and existence. (G).

SUBSTANCE. 1. That which exists in itself and not in another. Opposed to *accident*. Substance is the first of the 10 categories. 2. Divisions—*first substance*: the concrete individual subject, e.g., Peter. *second substance*: the essence abstracted from the subject, e.g., humanity. (G).

SUPERNATURAL. That which has relation to eternal life. Formerly signified merely that which exceeded the forces of nature.

SUPERSTITION. Sin of the man who believes that certain acts, certain words, certain numbers, or certain perceptions bring good or bad luck, and who seek or avoid these things for such a reason.

SUPPOSIT. The substantial, subsistent individual. Sometimes simply called *subject*. When this individual is a rational being, the supposit is known as a person.

SYMBOL. Something that represents something else by virtue of an analogical relationship.

SYNAXIS. Assembly of Christians celebrating Mass.

SYNCRETISM. Philosophical or religious system that mingles doctrines of diverse origins.

SYNCHRONIZED MASSES. Masses celebrated simultaneously by several priests at several altars. Not to be confused with *concelebration*.

SYNDERESIS. Natural habit by which we know the first principles of action. It is the analogue, on the practical level, of the understanding of principles (*intellectus principiorum*).

SYNOD. From a Greek word that means "company." Ancient name of the Councils. *Diocesan synod*: regular assembly of certain members of the hierarchy of a diocese.

SYNOPSIS. Simultaneous vision of several things. *The Synoptics*: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that can easily be paralleled because of their great similarities.

TALION (Law of). "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (Ex. 21:24). Among the Jews, only judges made the application of this law. Later on, the Jewish doctors abused it. Our Lord put an end to this abuse (Mt. 5:38).

TALMUD. Vast collection of Jewish literature, including, both in Hebrew and in Aramaic, the Mishna and the commentaries of the Schools of the third to the sixth centuries of our era. There are two versions of it, those of Jerusalem and Babylon.

TARGUM. Translations (and commentaries) of the Biblical texts in Aramaic, begun in the sixth century before the Christian era.

THEOLOGICAL "LOCI." Documents, facts, sciences, or intellectual *habitus*, in which theology finds the principles of its argumentation.

THEOPHANY. Manifestation of God.

THEORETICAL. That which is the object of pure speculation or contemplation. Opposed to practical. The theoretical sciences. (G).

THEOSOPHY. Doctrine whose object is union with God outside of all revealed religion.

TIME. The measurement of movement in terms of before and after. Is opposed to eternity (perfect and simultaneous possession of life without end) and to the *aevum* (pure duration, without succession, of the angelic substances).

TORAH. Hebrew name of the Book of the Law of Moses (the Pentateuch).

TRANSCENDENTAL. That which is above the genres (or categories) of being. *Transcendental properties* (the one, the true, the good), those that befit being as being and are consequently found in every genus.

TRUTH. 1. In a general way, conformity of the intellect and of the thing. 2. *Logical truth*: conformity of the intellect with the thing known. This conformity is found only in the second operation of the mind, the judgment. 3. *Ontological or transcendental truth*: the property of every being by which it is conformable to the intelligence that is its principle, that is to say, to the creative intelligence of God. (G).

TYPOLGY. Study of the types or figures of the Old Testament that are related to the New Testament.

ULTRAMONTANISM. Doctrine and politics of French Catholics who seek their inspiration and their support "beyond the mountains" (the Alps) at the Roman Court. Opposed to Gallicanism.

UNIVERSAL. Term or concept taken in its fullest sense. *Quarrel of the Universals*: discussion concerning the realistic value of universal concepts. (G).

UNIVOCAL. Property of a concept or term that is related to its inferiors according to an absolutely identical signification. Opposed to *analogous* and to *equivocal*. (G).

VEGETATIVE (life). Totality of the

lower vital functions common to all living beings: nutrition, growth, reproduction. (G).

VIOLENT. That which is contrary to the natural inclinations of a being. *Violent movement* is that which opposes these natural inclinations.

VOLUNTARISM. Attitude of mind according to which things are not known in their being and in their truth, but according to the will's inclination in their regard.

Vow. (In Latin, *votum*.) 1. Desire or intention. A sacrament is received *in voto* providing the faith of the believer desires to receive it and is receptive to the grace which the sacrament gives. Example: Baptism of desire. 2. Promise by which a religious has pledged himself. See **PROFESSION**.

VULGATE. Latin version of the Bible, the work of St. Jerome, at least in greater part, and declared official by the Council of Trent.

WILL. Appetite (or inclination) of intellectual knowledge, or the mind's power of love. Certain philosophies stemming from Cartesianism consider the will as power of violence, capable of combating the movements of nature. That is accidental. The will is essentially a natural appetite of the mind in search of plenitude and fulfillment.

WORD. 1. (Psycho.). *Mental Word*: interior term of the intellectual act in which the intellect contemplates its object. (G). 3. (Theol.). Name attributed by St. John to the Son of God and that reveals to us the nature of generation in God.

YAHWEH. Proper noun by which the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob revealed Himself to Moses. See Vol. II, pp. 4-5. *Yahwism*. Religion of the prophets of Yahweh. *Yahwist*. Name given to one of the traditions that make up the Torah. (See **ELOHIST**, **PRIESTLY CODE**, **DEUTERONOMIST**.)

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This world of signs has all the fullness of a whole life. Among these signs, certain ones have particular importance, through the will of Christ who instituted them. First among these are Baptism and the Eucharist, the Sacraments of the Pasch, the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, of the redeemed people, of the Church. Baptism and the Eucharist sum up the whole mystery of Christ, our whole liturgy, all our feasts, our entire worship, our whole Christian life, and all our hopes. They are the cornerstone and the crowning of the whole sacramental structure.

Around these two Sacraments, cluster a number of "lesser signs": first of all, the other Sacraments, and then the sacramentals, which form all the Christian rites.

Because the signs of the Church form a single whole, and because there is a hierarchy among the sacramentals as well as among the Sacraments, the first chapter on "The Sacraments in General" presents a preliminary but necessary over-all view. Then the Sacraments are presented in order under three classifications: 1) The Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist); 2) the Sacraments of Healing (Penance and Extreme Unction); and 3) The Sacraments of Ecclesial or Church Society (Holy Orders and Matrimony).



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